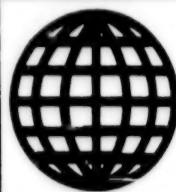


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16 October 1992



**FOREIGN
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JPRS Report

Near East & South Asia

Near East & South Asia

JPRS-NEA-92-137

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REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Sources Discuss Abu Musa, Tunb Talks

Talks Break Off

93AE0007A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 29 Sep 92
pp 1, 4

[Article by Shafiq al-Asadi: "Tehran Insists on Occupying Tunb al-Kubra and Tunb al-Sughra, Ignores UAE Demands"]

[Excerpts] Abu Dhabi—Direct negotiations between the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Iran to settle their dispute over three strategic islands located at the entrance to the Strait of Hormuz have ended in failure after it became impossible to reach any result regarding the UAE's demand concerning Tunb al-Kubra and Tunb al-Sughra islands. Abu Dhabi has decided to bring the issue before international bodies. [passage omitted]

The Iranian delegation, headed by Mostafa Fumani Ha'eri, head of the Iranian Foreign Ministry's Gulf department, who asked that yesterday morning's session be adjourned in order to hold consultations with his government, had been expected to present at the evening session a response to a note that the UAE delegation had presented that set forth Abu Dhabi's point of view about the dispute over the three islands. This response apparently presented nothing new.

Sources made it clear that the UAE note, which was presented at the morning session that lasted only 40 minutes, demanded an end to Iran's continued occupation of Tunb al-Kubra and Tunb al-Sughra and the end of Iran's measures taken six months ago to impose its full control over Abu Musa Island. The sources said that Iran made no encouraging initiative to respond to the UAE request. They expected the records of the case to be turned over to international bodies to settle the dispute over the islands. [passage omitted]

The sources affirmed that the UAE's position in its note to the Iranian delegation "was one of principle and not subject to retraction" and that it linked the solution to the issue of the three islands together as one issue. Observers say that Iran's rejection of any discussion of ending its occupation of Tunb al-Kubra and Tunb al-Sughra will put Iran in a difficult position because it have to face strong pressure from the international community. In fact, Abu Dhabi had already announced that if the negotiations failed, it would appeal to international law and place the issue before the relevant international bodies. [passage omitted]

Observers indicate that Tehran, which sent its delegation to Abu Dhabi under the pressure of Gulf, Arab, and international support for the UAE, intended to spread an optimistic atmosphere about the possibility of reaching a solution to the problem on the basis of a good neighbor policy, good relations with the Gulf countries, and ending foreign intervention in the region.

Throughout the two days of negotiations, officials and the information media in Iran kept speaking about friendly

political relations with the other Gulf countries. However, Iranian officials stressed that their country was not prepared to withdraw from the islands and end the occupation of them.

Observers added that by holding direct negotiations with the UAE, Iran was trying to avoid having the issue raised before international bodies, whose position certainly will not be in favor of continued occupation of the islands.

Diplomatic sources stated that the UAE would proceed with its plan to bring the conflict before the UN Security Council and General Assembly—the latter is currently holding meetings of its regular session. Foreign Minister Rashid 'Abdallah al-Nu'aymi of the UAE is scheduled to deliver a speech to the General Assembly tomorrow (Wednesday). He may include in it an official request for discussion of the Iranian occupation of the three islands that control the flow of international shipping into the Gulf, which provides an important share of the world's energy needs.

The sources pointed out that by negotiating with the UAE, Iran may have been trying to stop international support for Abu Dhabi to regain its occupied islands and affirm its sovereignty over them. They said that the UAE negotiators had affirmed their adherence to their country's right to regain the islands and restore its sovereignty over them and that this had frustrated the Iranian maneuver. They indicated that the UAE request was consistent with resolutions of the GCC's [Gulf Cooperation Council] Ministerial Council and the Damascus Declaration countries on the 10th of this month in Doha and resolutions of the Arab League at its recent session in Cairo, thereby providing the request with broad support at the Arab and international levels.

The UAE presented a note to the United Nations in 1980 about Iran's occupation of the three islands. The note affirmed that the UAE had long awaited the results of the Iraq-Iran war, hoping that Iran would reconsider its position on the occupation of these islands after the end of the war, so as to bring about the desired stability in the region and strengthen cooperation between its countries.

Iranian Reaction

93AE0007B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
30 Sep 92 pp 1, 4

[Article by 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Siddiqi and Taj-al-Din 'Abd-al-Haqq: "Islands Issue To Be Raised Before UN Today; Iran Surprised by Rigid UAE Position"]

[Text] Abu Dhabi, London—The Iranian Foreign Ministry delegation returned to Tehran yesterday via Dubayy after the failure of its negotiations with the UAE Foreign Ministry delegation concerning the three UAE islands: Abu Musa, Tunb al-Kubra, and Tunb al-Sughra.

While the UAE initiated diplomatic contacts to explain its position during the negotiations, sources in the Iranian delegation said that they "were surprised by the rigid UAE position. Until the moment they arrived in Abu Dhabi, they thought that the UAE in raising the issue of Tunb

al-Kubra and Tunb al-Sughra was maneuvering in order to raise the stakes in its demand for Abu Musa Island."

The sources said that after the strong UAE statement, the Iranian delegation could not express Iran's reaction because "that required contacting Tehran and holding consultations on the subject."

Now that the negotiations have failed, it has become virtually certain that the UAE will submit the dispute to the United Nations. According to informed sources, UAE Foreign Minister Rashid 'Abdallah al-Nu'aymi will raise the issue in the speech he is scheduled to deliver today before the UN General Assembly and will contact foreign ministers and representatives of the international organization's member states to explain the UAE position.

Diplomatic sources in Abu Dhabi said: "The clearness and definiteness that marked the UAE statement issued after the failure of the negotiations makes the Abu Musa Island crisis that caused the dispute a small part of a larger crisis that may affect future relations between Iran and the Gulf."

The sources added that Iran "henceforth cannot ignore the fact that the crisis has a side other than Abu Musa. It must acknowledge that the silence that the UAE maintained for the past 20 years over the occupation of Tunb al-Kubra and Tunb al-Sughra has ended now and that any settlement of the dispute with the UAE must begin with the two islands."

Diplomatic sources were agreed in regarding any military confrontation to solve the dispute between the two sides as unlikely. They pointed out that the UAE statement explicitly included the phrase "recourse to peaceful means to assert UAE sovereignty over the three islands."

According to these sources, the growing power of the United Nations and the effectiveness marking its resolutions now have become a real means of deterrence. The UAE therefore does not actually need to resort to direct confrontation. Its success in obtaining support for its demands in the United Nations will give it the upper hand in the dispute and open the way for it to use various peaceful methods for regaining its rights over the three islands.

Although these sources do not expect UAE attempts to obtain an international resolution concerning the three islands to take a long time, the time frame in the issue seems marginal in relation to the price the UAE would have paid had it accepted Iran's terms for resolving the conflict. These terms were for recognition of Iran's sovereignty over the three islands in return for allowing [the UAE] to exercise a narrow and limited administration over the island of Abu Musa.

Diplomatic sources in Tehran mentioned yesterday that the dispute over Abu Musa Island has led to a sharp new division in the ranks of the Iranian leadership. Supporters of Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani have tried to minimize the importance of this dispute, even going as far as to say that the failed talks had been successful to some extent. They are concentrating on reaching an agreement

that would allow a new round of negotiations to begin in Tehran on an unspecified date.

Bijan Torabi, a commentator on Iranian affairs, said: "Rafsanjani, along with his Foreign Minister 'Ali Velayati, realize that what appears to be a small dispute could torpedo Iran's entire policy in the Gulf region." He interpreted Rafsanjani's policy in the region as "aimed at portraying Iran as a peaceful neighbor. If Iran returns to appearing as a country that poses a danger to the region, this will cancel the policy's chances for success."

When the Iranian delegation (headed by a relatively minor Foreign Ministry official) reached Abu Dhabi earlier this week, the Iranian negotiating plan focused on two assumptions: first, that UAE recognition of the 1971 agreement about Abu Musa Island would in itself be considered progress. This would give Rafsanjani a chance to say that he had succeeded where the shah's regime had failed. The original agreement was signed between al-Shariqah and Iran before the establishment of the UAE; UAE ratification of the agreement could be considered a diplomatic victory for Iran.

The second Iranian assumption was that the UAE would be satisfied with reaching a conciliatory settlement about implementing the agreement.

However, the Iranian delegation confronted two unexpected surprises. The UAE insisted on including the issue of Tunb-al-Kubra and Tunb al-Sughra on the agenda. Tehran could not agree, because its acceptance would have caused embarrassment and loss of face domestically. Iran had annexed the two islands by an act of parliament, and the Constitution does not allow Iran to negotiate the country's territorial sovereignty.

The second surprise in the Abu Dhabi negotiations was the UAE's insistence on setting the dates and formalities of negotiation about the question of sovereignty over Abu Musa.

The 1971 agreement left this question in abeyance, and Tehran was happy with the situation. Any talk about who will have ultimate sovereignty over Abu Musa will bring Rafsanjani's government face to face with great difficulties in Tehran.

There are indications that hardline groups in Tehran, which now enjoy indirect support from "Supreme Guide" 'Ali Khamene'i, would welcome a chance to use the question of the three islands as a means to damage the policy of conciliation with the Arab countries of the region.

Bahman Hekmat, an Iranian expert on Gulf affairs, said: "Most Iranians had never heard of these islands until last week, and Rafsanjani is still trying his best to keep quiet about the subject. But as soon as the people hear about the matter, it will be impossible for the Iranian leaders to give any significant concessions. This may mean opening the way leading to conflict."

Arab sources in Cairo told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Syria's foreign minister, Faruq al-Shar', was expected to pay another quick visit to Tehran to meet with Velayati in

a new Syrian attempt to prevent complications from occurring in the matter. They also indicated that the Syrian minister would later fly to Abu Dhabi, also on an urgent mission.

Syria, Jordan Set Up Free Market Trade

93P40006A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
3 Sep 92 p 9

[Report by Salwa Ustuwani]

[Text] Damascus—The Syrian-Jordanian joint economic committee, which just completed its business under the [joint] chairmanship of Syrian Economic and Foreign Trade Minister Dr. Muhammad al-'Ammadi and Jordanian Industry and Trade Minister Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur, has decided to liberalize trade between the two countries on a free-market basis and to set the prices for mutual trade [goods] in hard currency at current world prices.

The committee also decided to set up trade centers for each country's products. These centers are to be considered as a direct free market to consumers.

The committee also made several decisions to support work in joint companies, reported their final budgets for 1991 and 1992, and [made] some recommendations to encourage working in these joint companies and give them freedom of movement and cooperation.

Pact Allows Foreign Currency Out of Egypt

93P40001A

[Editorial Report] London AL-HAYAH in Arabic of 11 September 1992 on page 10 reports that Jordan and Egypt have just signed a trade agreement replacing the one they signed in 1967. Details of the agreement are not given.

London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic of 19 September 1992 on page 11 reports that, as of the week of 14 September 1992, Jordanian investors in the Cairo stock market may withdraw foreign currency from Egypt "without any prior agreement, arrangements, or conditions." Jordanian "economic experts" note that this coincides with Egypt's "canceling bilateral protocols and trade agreements with the Arab countries and replacing them with new agreements" like the one signed with Jordan "last week," as part of Egypt's economic liberalization policy.

GCC Countries Regulate Foreign Investments

92AE0619B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
15 Aug 92 p 10

[Report from Doha: "Gulf Organization for Industrial Consulting: GCC Foreign Investment Regulations Tend To Restrict Rather Than Attract"]

[Text] The Secretariat General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has issued a uniform system for foreign investments in the region as a guideline for the six-member GCC states when they formulate their own foreign investment rules and regulations.

An industrial report published in the monthly bulletin of the Gulf Organization for Industrial Consulting said that

three of the GCC states have already promulgated integrated laws covering rules, regulations, and procedures for foreign investments on their soil. Those three countries are Saudi Arabia (Rules for Foreign Capital Investment), the Sultanate of Oman (Law of Foreign Trades and Foreign Capital Investment), and Qatar (Regulating Non-Qatari Capital in Economic Activity).

Foreign capital investments in the industrial and commercial sectors in the UAE, Bahrain, and Kuwait are governed by assorted provisions in their respective commercial and industrial laws.

The report said that it is apparent from the rules and regulations governing foreign capital in GCC states that there is a prevailing propensity to restrict rather than to attract, induce, and coax. The reason, perhaps, is to protect domestic capital. There are indications, however, that such policies are changing. Qatari law offers such an indication, as do amendments to Bahrain's Company Law as promulgated by Decree No. 3 of 1991. The new legislation currently being drafted by Omani authorities to replace the existing law may support a policy to attract, coax, and induce foreign capital.

The report added that the Foreign Capital Investment Commission in Saudi Arabia, charged with acting on foreign investor applications, grants those applications only if foreign capital is invested in development projects other than oil extraction. No domestic partners are mandated.

Under Omani law, a foreigner may not engage in any trade or receive his share of the capital of an Omani company unless he first obtains a permit from the minister of commerce and industry. Such permits are granted only if investments are in the form of one of the commercial [juridical] entities stipulated in the Sultanate's Company Law and if that company is capitalized at no less than 150,000 Omani riyals. This capital requirement may be reduced to 30,000 riyals with the permission of the Foreign Capital Investment Commission and the approval of the minister of commerce and of the Development Council. The Omani share of capital shall account for no less than 35 percent of capital as approved by the Commission.

The report pointed out that the letter of the law must be observed in the State of Qatar and the UAE. Foreign investments in Qatar must be in the form of companies incorporated in Qatar under Commercial Company Law, which mandates 51 percent Qatari ownership.

The law excepts non-Qataris who make individual investments, provided two conditions are met—that they are licensed by an Amiri decree and that they invest for purposes of economic development or to facilitate the performance of a public service or public benefit in industry, agriculture, mining, drive engines, tourism, or business contracting.

In the UAE, Federation Law No. 11 of 1979 stipulates that only nationals are allowed to undertake industrial projects except as shareholders in corporations, where nationals contribute at least 51 percent of capital.

The law exempts projects for the extraction of oil and its derivatives, as well as projects that are capitalized at less 250,000 dirhams, that employ more than 10 people, or that use engines of no more than 5 horsepower; projects of preeminent domain; and projects under the state's general plan. Foreigner participation in such projects shall be determined by the state.

The report said that according to Decree No. 13 of 1991, nonnationals in Bahrain may own companies or may become partners with Bahrainis, unrestricted by the 51 percent domestic capital requirement, provided the objective is to establish an industrial company in Bahrain or to use Bahrain as the company's major investment venue for operations as stipulated by the minister of commerce.

The Industry Law in Kuwait stipulates that permits for industrial establishments may be issued only to Kuwaiti individuals or juridical entities. Kuwait's Commercial Law of 1980 mandates that companies be at least 51 percent Kuwaiti-owned, except for common trades. No alien may engage in commerce except in partnership with Kuwaiti nationals.

Bank Estimates 1992 GCC Oil Revenues

92AE0619A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 2 Aug 92 p 9

[Report from Dubai: "GCC Oil Revenues To Exceed \$73 Billion This Year"]

[Text] Economic circles in the UAE expect the economies of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states to react positively to more stable oil prices on world markets this year.

The Industrial Bank of the UAE, reporting on the effects of oil price stability on Gulf economies, said that oil prices that approach OPEC's target level of \$21 per barrel will significantly boost GCC oil export revenues in 1992 compared with the previous year.

Even if current production levels are maintained for the remainder of the year, without the seasonal increase to help meet higher fall and winter consumption in the West, revenues of OPEC-member GCC states would still be higher because of prevailing price differentials in the second half of 1992, the report added.

The bank had forecast GCC oil revenues last year at about \$70.5 billion, or 8.3 percent more than 1989 revenues of \$65.1 billion, essentially because Saudi oil revenues rose by 32 percent, to \$47.5 billion, compared with \$36 billion other GCC states, the bank pointed out, had lower oil receipts.

The Industrial Bank of the UAE estimates, released in a study late last year, had put 1991 oil revenues at about \$14 billion for the UAE, \$4.2 billion for Oman, \$2.5 billion for Qatar, \$1.1 billion for Bahrain, and \$1.4 billion for Kuwait.

Oil sources here indicate that Gulf oil revenues are expected to exceed \$73 billion this year, including \$3

billion in oil revenues that would accrue to Kuwait, within two months, once its oil production exceeds the 1 million barrels per day [bpd] mark.

The Industrial Bank's latest report also predicted that the GCC states would experience high levels of investment activity in the next few months as a result of increased oil revenues and the consequent improvement in the financial positions of the various governments. This would give a strong push to GDP growth in the region.

The bank also pointed out that the continued recession in industrial nations, accompanied by structural economic changes in the former Soviet Union, has caused the commodities markets to shrink. Aside from the various problems caused by inflation that afflicted many countries of the world, commodity prices in general rose only 2 percent from a year earlier, while oil prices, using Brent as a gauge, climbed nearly 10 percent.

The short-term effects on the economies of producer countries notwithstanding, the rise in oil prices is a remarkable phenomenon for two reasons—it runs counter to the trend for lower commodity and raw material prices, and it comes at a time of soft demand, when industry is involved with maintenance operations.

Oil prices had shot up after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, from \$16 per barrel in July of 1990 to \$33 per barrel in October of the same year, before retreating to \$17 per barrel in February of 1991. Prices then fluctuated between \$17 and \$18 per barrel until the fourth quarter of 1991, when they rose above \$20 per barrel in reaction to the disintegration of the former Soviet Union. Prices then retreated once again to \$16.5 per barrel in January of 1992.

But oil markets in general continued to soften early into 1992 as the anticipated [economic] recovery failed to materialize in industrial nations. Ample supplies and adequate product inventories added to the problem. Total OPEC production during that period amounted to about 24 million bpd, approximating aggregate short-term production capacity, except for Kuwait and Iraq.

OPEC reached a new agreement last February on production quotas. The accord took into consideration that the Iraqi and Kuwaiti product would be gradually returning to the market, thereby boosting OPEC production later in the year to an estimated 26.5 million barrels per day. The GCC states account for most of the increase.

Significant world developments occurred in 1992, including continued problems in Russia, which caused OPEC's share of aggregate world production to shrink [as published] to its current 35 percent. Those developments, however, increased OPEC's ability to influence prices. Preliminary figures put Russian production waste in the second half of 1991 at 1 million bpd, or 10 percent. OPEC has been covering that shortfall in past months, helping to bring prices close to its targeted median level for seven types of crude, which it set at \$21 per barrel in July of 1990, up from \$18 per barrel.

Unified Arab Economic Report for 1992

92AE0667A Jiddah AL-MADINAH in Arabic
12 Sep 92 p 13

[Article by 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Sanusi]

[Text] Riyadh—The Unified Arab Economic Report said that the unjust Iraqi aggression against Kuwait has seriously affected the Arab world's economy, causing \$620 billion in material losses for the Arab economy.

The Unified Report for 1992 deals with the most important features of these effects and reviews the most significant indices of the Arab economy's performance in the field of economic growth and in terms of the development of the Arab economic sectors and the financial and traditional aspects, including foreign trade, payments, and foreign debt.

With regard to Arab development aid, the report says that in 1990 the Arab countries provided about \$6.3 billion in easy-term development aid, that is more than four times the aid provided in 1989. Saudi Arabia provided \$2 billion of the total aid amount.

Referring to the situation of the Arab financial markets, the report says that the number of Arab companies holding shares in the financial market by the end of last decade totaled 1,063, with a total capital of \$30 billion.

With regard to market volume, Saudi Arabia is preeminent, followed by the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Egypt. The Saudi market scored the highest number of stock transactions in 1991. The following is text of the report:

The report begins by reviewing the most important economic developments in the Arab countries in 1991 and taking a close look at some of the economic effects of the Gulf crisis. Obviously, the crisis had extremely serious and far-reaching effects on the various aspects of the Arab economy. Last year's economic report contained preliminary estimates of the material losses resulting from the crisis. This year's economic report provides more specific details of the amount of material losses as a result of the crisis during the years 1991-92.

Perhaps the first manifestation of these negative effects is the sharp drop in economic growth in Kuwait and Iraq in particular, and, to a lesser extent, in the rest of the Arab countries. The losses resulting from this drop are estimated at \$185 billion.

The second phenomenon is the substantial increase in government spending by a number of Arab countries in order to meet expenditures that resulted from the crisis. This increase is estimated at \$84 billion.

The third phenomenon is the transfer of significantly large amounts of money abroad, from both government and private sources in Arab countries, which is estimated at \$51 billion.

This is in addition to the destruction of economic installations and the infrastructure in Kuwait and Iraq, which is estimated at \$162 billion for Kuwait and \$190 billion for

Iraq. This brings the total material losses incurred by the Arab countries to \$620 billion.

There are, of course, other losses that resulted from the crisis for which it is difficult to name a price. The foremost of these losses is the damage done to the environment. The report deals with the most important of these phenomena in its various chapters.

Now I would like to move on to reviewing the most important and significant indices of the Arab countries' economic performance according to the economic report for this year.

Arab Economic Growth

In the field of economic growth, the Arab economy began to regain its strength between 1986-89, increasing by an average of 3 percent each year. It performed particularly well in 1989, when it grew 5 percent. But the Gulf crisis pushed it back, with the real GNP (gross national product) of the Arab countries dropping by 1.3 percent at the beginning of the crisis year, 1990, and by about 7 percent in 1991.

Additionally, inflation rates in the Arab countries during 1990 and 1991 increased to levels that existed in the 1970's, which were about 20 percent.

Sector Development

On the level of development of the Arab economic sectors, the value added in the agricultural sector increased by an average of 7 percent annually from the beginning of the last decade to 1991, when it increased from \$26 billion to \$51 billion at current prices.

This has affected the Arab food gap, which showed a slight decrease, totaling about \$15 billion in 1991. It is worth noting that the Arab countries spent about \$165 billion on food imports in 1990-91.

There is no doubt that this poses a grave danger to the Arab homeland's sources of supply if a disturbance occurs in any of the import sources. Therefore, the economic report stresses the importance of developing Arab agriculture with the aim of achieving greater food security.

Industry

In the industrial sector, the value added at 1991 prices dropped by 12 percent. The extraction industries' contribution to the GNP decreased from 24 percent to 21 percent, while the processing industry's contribution remained unchanged at 10 percent.

One of the most significant economic changes was the important developments in the oil refining industry in the Arab homeland in 1991, including dealing with part of the damage and destruction from the Gulf crisis, which caused Arab oil production to drop by about 2.2 percent in 1991, compared with last year. Arab oil revenues totaled about \$96 billion in 1991, compared with \$101 billion in 1990. In 1991, the share of Arab oil exports reached 38 percent of the world's oil exports.

Financial and Currency Development

In the field of financial and monetary developments, the process of rectification that most of the Arab countries initiated in recent years was expected to continue, but the tragic events that the Arab homeland experienced as a result of the Gulf crisis have forced several countries to

increase their public spending, which led to a greater deficit in government budgets. This has led to a parallel increase in the rate of government cash liquidity. Thus, after the total rate of deficit in government budgets in all the Arab countries reached about 5 percent in 1992 [as published], which is the lowest rate since 1982, the rate increased to about 18 percent in 1991.

Foreign Trade

In the field of foreign trade and payments, the value of Arab trade in 1990 increased for the fourth successive year. Arab exports increased by about 27 percent, which is equivalent to two times the growth rate of world exports. Arab imports also increased by 14 percent, thus setting the highest increase since 1987. But the growth of Arab imports was less than the growth rate of world imports because the rectification efforts have helped the Arab countries maintain control of the import growth rate. This has helped improve the trade balances of most of the Arab countries. The surplus of the total trade balance reached \$31 billion in 1990. But 1991 estimates show a drop in the surplus by about 1.5 percent as a result of the Gulf crisis.

Thus we can see that the overall balance of the Arab world has shown a deficit of about \$4 billion, most of which was covered by withdrawals from reserves or by borrowing.

The official Arab countries' foreign reserves increased by about 21 percent in 1991. The total value of reserves exceeded \$43 billion, the highest level since 1988.

Foreign Debt

With regard to the volume of the Arab countries' foreign debts, the volume of borrowing countries' foreign public debt dropped in 1990 by about 3.3 percent, that is, approximately \$153 billion.

The debt-to-GNP ratio dropped by more than 10 percent, reaching 75 percent in 1990. Part of this is due to some of the creditor Arab countries canceling some of the official debts owed by some borrowing countries.

The burden of servicing the foreign debt of the borrowing Arab countries in 1990 increased by about 11 percent. They paid about \$17 billion in debt service, which is equivalent of one-third of their returns of goods and services.

Arab Development Aid

With regard to Arab development aid, the Arab countries in 1900 offered about \$6.3 billion in easy-term development aid, which is more than four times the amount offered in 1989.

Thus the easy-term Arab development aid offered since 1970 reached \$100 billion, of which the Arab Gulf countries provided 93 percent. The contribution by Saudi Arabia was 64 percent, Kuwait 16 percent, and the UAE 10 percent. The GNP-to-aid ratio in 1990 reached 12.3 percent for Kuwait, 4 percent for Saudi Arabia, and 3 percent for the UAE, compared with an average of 0.35 percent for the countries that are members of the Development Aid Committee.

In 1991, Saudi Arabia also offered about \$2 billion [in aid], of which \$1.5 billion is an outright grant. It also canceled more than \$6 billion in debts owed to it by several Arab and African countries. No details are available yet regarding the other countries that granted aid.

It is worth noting that 60 percent of the Arab development aid goes to the Arab countries, and the rest goes to Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Certain Arab countries have also benefited from workers' remittances, which were equivalent to 150 percent of the total, or \$90 billion, of development aid offered to the Arab countries during the period 1973-89. The total benefit the Arab countries gained from the Arab development aid and from workers' remittances was 5.5 percent of the GNP of the benefiting countries during the same period, which is equivalent to one-fifth of their imports and more than one-fifth of the total investments of these countries.

Financial Markets

An appendix has been added to the Unified Arab Economic Report this year that contains a special chapter on the situation in the Arab financial markets. It says the number of registered stock-holding companies by the end of the last decade was 1,063 companies, with a total capital of about 30 billion, which is small compared with the amount of Arab money invested abroad and the amount of Arab deposits in foreign banks. The ratio of the shareholders' rights to GNP is 10 percent, compared with about 30 percent in the developing countries and 60 percent in the industrialized countries.

In terms of size, the Saudi market comes first, followed by the UAE, Bahrain, and Egypt. The Saudi market scored the highest value for shares traded in 1991, followed by Jordan. The newly established markets in Bahrain and Oman made substantial progress in terms of capital value of registered companies and trading volume.

The report reviews the most significant obstacles that prevent the development of the Arab financial markets. It points to the small number of shareholding companies and the lack of legal, accounting, and control cadres. It also points to the total absence of a secondary market, the low demand for stocks, and the scarcity of financial brokerage institutes, along with a lack of awareness about investments and the existence of national legislation that bans registering and trading stocks between the Arab financial markets.

Thus we can see that the Arab markets cannot remain far apart from one another, lacking many of the means of existence and development, while the world is tending toward integrating and merging its markets. Therefore, the Unified Economic Report this year stressed the importance of the Arab Monetary Fund in developing the Arab financial markets and forging ties between them.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Rantisi on Improving Fatah-Hamas Relations

92AE0629A Amman AL-RIBAT in Arabic 18 Aug 92 p 11

[Reprint from Jerusalem AL-QUDS of an interview with Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, a founder of Hamas movement; place and date not given]

[Text] Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, a founder of Hamas Islamic movement, has reaffirmed the unequivocal Islamic stand on all of the proposed political solutions for solving the Palestinian problem. The stand is based on the spirit of the Islamic creed that does not allow ceding any part of Muslim land. Dr. al-Rantisi expressed his desire and that of Dr. Muhammad al-Zahhar to go to Jordan to meet with Palestinian activists abroad in order to reach a solution to the Palestinian problem.

The two men will also meet with PLO members to discuss issues related to autonomy and the pressures to which the Islamic organizations at home are being subjected. A dialogue will be held with Fatah concerning Fatah-Hamas relations and the regrettable incidents that took place between them. The following is the text of the interview:

[AL-QUDS] What is the objective of the visit to Jordan now?

[Al-Rantisi] The Palestinian problem today is passing through the most critical and dangerous stages. Because we sense the Islamic public's feelings, we believe it would be beneficial for our Palestinian people to meet with our brothers abroad to exchange views in order to reach an agreement that would serve our cause, help to close ranks, prevent recurring violence, and establish dialogue as a means to resolve differences of views.

[AL-QUDS] What will you propose at this meeting?

[Al-Rantisi] All issues will be subject to discussion, the most important of which is the peace plan and what type of autonomous rule it would lead to. Discussions will also deal with the question of the Islamic organizations and the pressure to which they are being subjected, the foremost of which is the Islamic League. There is to be a comprehensive discussion of the question of relations between Fatah and Hamas, the regrettable incidents that took place between them, and their negative impact. We will try to reach an agreement that would organize relations between the supporters of the peace plan and those opposed to it.

[AL-QUDS] How do you see the situation in Gaza following the reconciliation between Fatah and Hamas movements?

[Al-Rantisi] Thank God, the situation is calm, and its future looks well. Indeed, the Reform Committee has exerted every possible effort to stop incidents. The committee has set up a subcommittee for investigation and arbitration. It began its work 10 days ago.

[AL-QUDS] What is the attitude of the Islamic movement toward the political process?

[Al-Rantisi] There is a firm Islamic stand on all of the political solutions being proposed in the Palestinian arena. This stand stems from the spirit of the Islamic creed that provides that it is impermissible to cede any part of Muslim land and, likewise, it is impermissible to forsake the Islamic holy places in Mecca and Jerusalem. Both places are linked to the Islamic creed. In my view, autonomy means abandoning the entire Palestinian soil. Therefore, we believe that signing any agreement of this kind will absolutely not be binding for the Islamic movement. This is a firm stand that will not change.

[AL-QUDS] What is your attitude toward an elected legislative council?

[Al-Rantisi] If parliamentary elections take place, involving all of the Palestinians at home and abroad in order to decide whether the project is acceptable or not, we will not hesitate to participate in such elections. These elections would provide an opportunity for a referendum on the project. But if the elections are for a parliament in which the winning members will implement autonomy in the occupied territory, then we will not participate in them and will reject them.

[AL-QUDS] How does the Islamic movement view the controversial question of a Palestinian police force?

[Al-Rantisi] Having a Palestinian police force of more than 20,000, as has been reported—such a force could only be a repressive organization in the occupied territories.

[AL-QUDS] Any final words?

[Al-Rantisi] We are proceeding toward a serious stage. I call on every Palestinian to use his common sense instead of his emotions. I hold every Palestinian responsible for taking action to stop any incidents or sedition that might break out in the future. The message that I am addressing to my people has also been addressed to the PLO leadership.

Negotiators Reportedly To Demand Radio, TV Station

93P40004A Amman AL-LIWA' in Arabic 9 Sep 92 p 3

[Excerpt] Jerusalem, QUDS PRESS—Palestinian sources in occupied Jerusalem say that the Palestinian side in the peace negotiations with Israel is committed to demanding the building of a radio and television station for the Palestinians in the occupied territories. The sources affirmed that the proposed station would be built in east Jerusalem or in another area of the occupied West Bank if Israel agrees to the Palestinian proposal. These sources believe that the Palestinian side will seek European support to build this station, particularly in connection with providing technical assistance and broadcasting and transmission equipment. [passage omitted]

Infrastructure Problems Spark Protests Near Hebron

92AE0646A London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic
29 Aug 92 p 5

[Article by Salah al-Diri: "Environmental Pollution Serious in Bayt Fajjar, Damages Infrastructure Facilities"]

[Excerpt] On 27 August, 1,000 residents in the Hebron district village of Surif on the West Bank demonstrated in protest over what they described as the "complete dilapidation" that has pervaded their village for the past five years, which has affected all vital facilities, including water-damaged streets with potholes and a lack of telephone and electricity lines. They also protested the lack of water in their village, which has a population of at least 12,000.

Anger has driven the residents to conduct a mass demonstration since the morning of the 27th outside the Israeli agency that is subordinate to the so-called town administration, located in [Idna al-Quraybah], to protest living conditions to the Israeli authorities who are believed to be responsible for this situation. One village notable described these conditions as unbearable and no longer easy for the residents to endure.

Surif represents a living example of hundreds of Palestinian villages in the occupied territories that have existed in a state of complete dilapidation—in all facilities—for at least five years.

For at least three years in Bayt Fajjar, which is located south of Bethlehem, the residents' talk has been focused on the destruction that their village has suffered, which has affected all utilities without exception. The residents' health has been negatively and directly affected by "serious environmental pollution." Fatigue and depression have afflicted every stranger or visitor who enters Bayt Fajjar, which is considered the most important center of building stone production in the West Bank, containing about 100 factories to cut and saw the stone. These factories emit pollution, dirt, and dust. Streets have been completely damaged, and a considerable number of the asphalt roads have been lost, changed into potholes, ruts, and dirt streets. Clouds of dust have severely polluted the environment so that the residents can only breathe dust both night and day. Their houses and furniture are covered with dust and do not benefit from daily cleaning and washing. Umm Ghassan said that she "does not want a miracle to happen, just the paving of the destroyed streets, which stir up the dirt, as if the village was in the middle of the desert."

Despite the fact that Bayt Fajjar is also well-known for the grape vines that surround it, the green color is almost completely gone. All of the vines and trees have been turned a dingy white color because of the layers of dust that cover them. The dust is caused by the movement of about 500 trucks and small vehicles around the village streets. The village residents constantly ask the Israeli authorities to take responsibility for the village and its infrastructure, particularly to pave the streets, which have only been

paved once since 1967, and to restore the telephone lines that have been cut off from the village for five years.

The village mukhtar, 'Ali Murshid, said that the Israeli authorities were deceiving the people, having promised a long time ago to pave the streets, but without doing anything. In fact, they imposed the stipulation that the resigned village council be restored, or a new village council formed, as a necessary condition for any services that might be agreed to in the village. Many observers believe that the pretext of forming village councils in the villages, as a condition for the Israeli authorities to offer basic services for these villages, is only a deception to shirk their legal responsibility toward these villages, which represent three-fourths of the residents of the West Bank. Observers say that Surif, for example, has had a village council since 1967, but the presence of this council has not prompted the authorities to give the village the services it needs. In Bayt Fajjar, the village council resigned at the outset of the intifadah, under pressure from the population as being a council appointed by the Israeli authorities. It had lost the people's confidence. The Israeli authorities have employed all kinds of pressure and punishments possible against the residents, in order to force them to restore the village council with its previous members. However, they failed. The authorities also failed in their attempts, last year, to appoint a new village council, because the residents made free elections a condition for forming a village council. This was summarily rejected by the Israeli authorities.

In their rejection of the principle of appointing a village council, the residents are starting from the premise that their village not be the beginning of a process that has been rejected by a national consensus in the occupied territories, especially since similar attempts by the authorities to appoint village councils or restore resigned village councils have been unsuccessful in scores of other villages. Moreover, the residents have ignored a "village committee" formed by the authorities in Bayt Fajjar, after promises from these authorities to support this committee in rebuilding the village. However, more than six months have passed since the formation of this committee, and nothing has been done. The committee members stated that the Israeli promises were lies and deceptions and that the authorities have renewed their condition that a village council be appointed. [passage omitted]

Article Lists Prisoners on Food Strike, Protests

93AE0009A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
4 Oct 92 p 4

[Article by 'Abd-al-Salam Shahadah]

[Text] Occupied Territories—More Palestinian prisoners have joined the strike that has been staged by other prisoners in Israeli jails since Sunday, 27 September. The strike involves prisoners in most of the jails administered by Israeli prison authorities. The hunger strike is expected to widen if the demands that were submitted at other jails under direct administration by the Israeli Army are not met. A spirit of solidarity with the strikers is widespread. This solidarity finds expression in the daily mass activities

that coincided with the conclusion of the sixth session of the negotiations in Washington. In the eyes of the masses in the occupied territories and of the prisoners in Israeli detention camps and jails, the talks have failed.

Some 6,000 prisoners, out of about 14,000 Palestinian detainees, are taking part in the hunger strike so far. The strike has been joined by prisoners in Ramla, Nafhah, Ashkelon, Beersheba, and Kefar Yona, all of which are inside the Palestinian territory that was occupied in 1948.

It is to be noted that arresting persons from the occupied territories outside their territory or in the territory of the occupying state constitutes a breach of international rules, laws, and regulations. Prisoners in Junayd, Nabulus Central, Janin, Hebron, and Gaza Central prisons in the occupied territories also went on strike. Strikers in two other jails joined the strike yesterday. These were Ramallah prison and the women's prison in Tel Mond.

The strikers' demands, as stated in their messages and in statements issued by legal institutions in the occupied territories, call for improvement in health care and food, the easing of crowding, the right to talk to lawyers, and the implementation of the Geneva conventions with regard to the right to education, including receiving books and sitting for exams, because the majority of the prisoners are at the age for secondary and college education. The prisoners also demand the dismantling of solitary cells, the right to perform religious rites, commitment to daily open-air recreation, airing the cells, unrestricted water supply to the wards, easing restrictions on family visits, and ending the policy of humiliation through the daily body search.

Since the hunger strike was launched, organized mass support has been evident in the streets, with masses staging sit-in strikes in front of the International Red Cross offices in the occupied territories. Since the beginning of this month, Gaza Strip has been staging daily commercial strikes. Daily mass demonstrations march in support of the strikers. A demonstration by about 500 family members of detainees' marched to the Saray [government building] that includes Gaza Central Prison, which houses about 700 detainees. More than 1,000 students joined the procession. They encircled the building, and a clash with the army ensued. Similar demonstrations marched in Nabulus, Tulkarm, and Janin. The people are preparing for a program of escalating protest that will include commercial and school strikes.

A student demonstration marched to the Red Cross headquarters the town of Rafah, where hundreds of the prisoners' mothers, who were staging a sit-in strike, received the students with trilling cries of joy, national songs, and shouts of "We'll starve, we'll starve but won't succumb". They also shouted the prisoners' names.

Crying, the mother of Nasir Filfil said: "My son has been detained for a long time in Nafhah prison. He is in grave need of surgery. We call on all of the institutes concerned to stand with the prisoners and support their just demands." The mother of Tal'at Musa said that her son, who is in detention for 18 months, is in need of spectacles,

but the detention administration will not allow them to be delivered. She added: "We demand that the detainees should be allowed to see their young children in normal conditions during visits, not from behind barbed wire and in the midst of shouting. Detainees condemned to long imprisonment terms should at least be allowed to see their children in normal conditions."

Representatives from local organizations have visited Red Cross headquarters to express support for the detainees and their families. Persons who were handicapped [as a result of intifadah incidents] visited headquarters of the local labor unions, riding in wheel chairs. The detainees' mothers stressed that they will continue the strike at the headquarters until the prisoners' demands are met.

It is recalled that prisoners in eight jails declared a hunger strike in June 1991. The strike ended then with a promise by the military administration to the lawyers' association to respond to certain demands, but the promise remained unfulfilled, despite repeated demands by the prisoners. Certain Palestinian sources expected that the prisoners' living conditions to improve after Rabin took power and in light of the on-going peace talks. But no progress has been made since, other than the release last month, in a public relations exercise, of those who had actually served their sentence. The 11 Palestinians who were threatened with deportation were put in jail after the deportation order was rescinded.

Amman Study Estimates Housing Needs Under Self-Rule

92AE0685A Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 3 Sep 92 p 25

[Article: "Occupied Territories Suffer Stifling Housing Crisis; Cumulative Housing Unit Shortage May Reach 130,000 Units by Year 2000"]

[Excerpts] The occupied territories are suffering a large number of crises and problems in various areas. These crises are a direct effect of the occupation authorities, who follow a premeditated policy aimed at creating such crises and problems. The following report from the Jerusalem Center for Strategic Studies ("Palestinian Housing in the Year 2000 and the Crisis of the 250,000 Units") published by the specialized magazine issued by the Royal Committee for Jerusalem Affairs gives facts and data about the stifling housing crisis in the occupied territories.

Local specialists see the occupied Arab lands as suffering a stifling housing crisis. The yearly shortage in 1990 amounted to nearly 8,000 housing units, compared to the year 1985, which recorded an estimated yearly shortage of 5,000 apartments.

We can say that the size of the cumulative shortage has increased because of the situation the Palestinian people are encountering inside [Palestine], either in terms of the intifadah or because of the Gulf crisis and Israeli practices, both of which have greatly affected the local building sector, and perhaps because of the halting of external support, particularly after the beginning of the intifadah when the authorities decided to limit to 200 Jordanian

dinars the amount of money one can bring in. (This sum was subsequently raised to just 400 dinars.)

The increasing economic suffering of the citizens and the sharp drop in the volume of savings, in addition to the absence of general political stability, have led to a loss of the inclination to invest capital in building projects. For us to return to the same shortage that prevailed in the preintifadah period, we need approximately \$300 million for investment in the building sector.

In any case, the accumulated shortage of housing units in the West Bank and Gaza now is around 90,000 housing units, according to preliminary estimates.

We need this tremendous number of housing units in order to be able to overcome the housing crisis in the occupied territories. This naturally requires the provision of tremendous capital, on the one hand, and no less than 10 years of continual construction, on the other hand.

If the situation remains as is, the cumulative shortage by 2000 is expected to be nearly 130,000 housing units. However, if a peace agreement is reached or a Palestinian state is established and Palestinians return from abroad, the housing problem will be one of the greatest and most complex problems facing the fledgling future Palestinian Government. The problem will be at the top of the scale of national priorities, along with the related operation of building infrastructure, such as roads and electricity, especially since the structure currently in place is primitive, rundown, and obsolete, while some of it was put in place after 1967 to serve Israeli settlements.

In general, the volume of housing units that will need to be erected if peace comes to the region is estimated at no fewer than 250,000—this merely to house citizens who are expected to return from abroad. This assuredly will require a very large amount of capital. Local experts predict that the number of residents of the West Bank in 2000 will reach 1.5 million: 1,405,059 to be precise, assuming an annual rate of natural increase equaling 3.6 percent of the total population, while the population of the Gaza Strip at that time will have reached nearly 1,089,016 Palestinians, based on an average rate of natural increase no greater than 3.8 percent. Thus, the total number of Palestinian citizens living in the West Bank and Gaza, including occupied Arab Jerusalem, is predicted to pass 2.5 million during the next 10 years.

If there is a peace agreement or settlement between Israel and the PLO guaranteeing the permanent national rights of the Palestinian people, no fewer than 1 million Palestinians will probably return to their national state from among those who now live in dispersion, emigration, or outside the occupied territories.

It should be mentioned that some estimates indicate that the total population of the West Bank last year (1990) was about 986,500 citizens, while the total number of residents of the Gaza Strip was about 750,000 Palestinians. [passage omitted]

It can be seen that West Bank has an overall population density of 175 persons per square kilometer. Tulkarm is

one of the most densely populated subdistricts, with a density as high as 408 persons per square kilometer. Jericho, with 38 persons per square kilometer, represents the least densely populated subdistrict. [passage omitted]

It can also be seen that the degree of crowding of individuals into a single room in the occupied territories is remarkably high, with 50 percent of the total population suffering from this problem, which indicates the size of the housing crisis. A recently conducted study of crowding into single rooms in the occupied territories states that 46.1 percent of citizens live in a room occupied by 3 or more persons. (In Israel, the figure is only 4.3 percent.) It also was found that the figure for single rooms occupied by one person is 5.7 percent in the West Bank and Gaza, while the same figure in Israel is 52.2 percent. [passage omitted]

Another side of the problem is that costs of building materials have risen due to the linkage of the occupied territories to the Israeli market and economy, as is well known. The cost per square meter of residential construction also has risen greatly since 1967. In 1965, the cost per square meter was 12 dinars. The cost is currently about 120 dinars per square meter. In addition, land prices have risen either because certain families control large areas of land and thus have a monopoly, which increases the price of the land, or because of the tendency of some people to invest their money by buying land. [passage omitted]

Furthermore, the fact that the rentals law is behind the reality of the times discourages people with capital from investing in construction and works to raise apartment prices. This law, which was in force under the Jordanian administration and whose roots reach into the period of the British mandate, was drafted at that time to protect British tenants working as employees or others who rented housing from Palestinian landlords. The British administration worked to protect these tenants and issued this law for their benefit.

Yet another factor has been the policy of destroying or locking houses to punish citizens charged with committing hostile acts against the authorities. The authorities have destroyed or locked 1,770 houses as punishment since the outbreak of the intifadah and have destroyed an equal number on the pretext that they lacked permits. Maqdis Strategic Studies has estimated the material loss to owners of houses destroyed for security reasons during the intifadah alone as about \$21,795,000, assuming that it would cost between \$30,000 and \$50,000 to guarantee reconstruction of a single house on the same lot.

Changes in Palestinian society and migration from the countryside to the cities also have helped aggravate the housing situation. No one can fail to recognize that inter-family relations in our society have become more fragmented than they used to be when a son, upon marriage, used to live at the home of his parents, taking a room in the house if it was sufficiently large or else building one or two rooms onto the house with his father. These values have been affected by change. Now, when a person marries, he

rents far from his parents because he seeks independence in his private life. This has unnecessarily increased the demand for houses.

The Palestinian leadership therefore has been alert to the housing problem and has accorded it special importance in terms of the material support that the PLO has created for development inside [Palestine] through housing societies, believing as it does that it must solve part of this problem in order to help citizens hold out on their national soil. [passage omitted]

Although the problem of defining the home in which an individual is to live with his family is a private matter affecting the family in question, providing a minimum of space and domestic services to guarantee suitable sanitary conditions and a family atmosphere that gives children an opportunity for their bodies and personalities to grow is a problem for society. Society is thus obligated to find appropriate solutions for this problem.

If the situation remains as it is, the result is expected to be a great increase in the population, a dangerous shortage of housing and drinking water, and the shrinkage of the agriculture land area. [passage omitted]

The future Palestinian state will also confront major problems before a remedy is found, as mentioned previously, but we think it will be possible to reduce the size of these problems if the following conditions are met:

- Creating a housing bank to grant low-interest, long-term loans that are backed by collateral or guarantors for constructing new housing units.
- Supporting unfinished housing projects and erecting new popular housing complexes for the needy according to priorities. [passage omitted]
- Erecting housing projects based on the principle of low rent, not ownership. Factories and institutions should be established in tandem with these projects, according to the philosophy of "industrial or agricultural villages."
- The architecture of the construction should be horizontal, not vertical, so as to cover the largest land area, especially in areas expected to be confiscated by the authorities. Infrastructure must be created in these localities—roadbuilding, for example—and the people must be persuaded to live in these areas.
- The subjects must be thoroughly studied technically and architecturally to arrive at the best economies in building methods, use of currently manufactured resources, and use of economical designs that prevent waste, such as occurred in previous housing projects.
- Amending the rentals law so that leases, for example, become binding for a period of five to 10 years, after which the property owner can reclaim his property; also, amending all pre-1975 rents because of their cheapness, setting an agreed maximum for future rents, and establishing unofficial courts composed of patriotic lawyers who will work to decide such cases. [passage omitted]

Press Center Interviews 'Collaborator Camp' Residents

92AE0685B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
27 Sep 92 pp 1, 4

[Article: "930 Spies and Their Families Seek Protection in 'Collaborators' Settlement']

[Text] Janin, Occupied West Bank (West Bank Press Services Center)—An Israeli television reporter addressed the following question to a member of the Red Eagles group who had just been arrested: "There is one bullet in your pistol, and suddenly you find yourself facing an Israeli soldier and a Palestinian collaborator. Whom do you kill?" He answered without hesitation, "The collaborator." The reporter asked him why. He replied, "The soldier does not know who I am, but the collaborator knows everything about me; so he is more dangerous."

South of the City of Janin in a former Jordanian Army camp, Israeli authorities have established a camp called Camp Fahmah to house and protect exposed Palestinian spies who seek safety.

The Israeli authorities are faced with the problem of protecting their network of collaborators. They also face a question about their fate after the stage of self-rule is implemented. Protection takes various forms. Some previously unarmed persons are given weapons, and others are taken inside the Green Line. The idea of mobilizing these collaborators in the form of militias has taken shape among the occupation authorities. In this context, the Israeli public security apparatus known as Shabak [General Security Service] established Fahmah, began training collaborators to use various kinds of firearms, and began to employ them in setting up roadblocks and ambushes to bring down the largest possible number of intifadah activists, especially because the collaborators know the geography of Palestine well and know the local citizens who live in the area.

The people of Janin and the nearby villages look on the collaborator camp with contempt and scorn. Some call it "the collaborators' settlement." Others describe it as "the camp of shame." Collaborators have become a constant target for the strike forces, the popular resistance, and pursuit groups because of the great danger that collaborators pose for these groups, knowing, as they do, what Israeli soldiers, being aliens to the region and its people, cannot know.

The Israeli authorities forbid journalists to enter Fahmah Camp unless they obtain permission from the Israeli civil administration. A correspondent of Israeli newspaper THE JERUSALEM POST recently visited Fahmah Camp and met the "chief" of the collaborators, as he described him. His name is Ahmad Hamarshah (age 39). He is a former resident of the town of Ya'bad, a few kilometers from Fahmah. The Israeli reporter said that he saw an Uzi machine gun in Hamarshah's possession. The gun was lying on a sofa in the living room where the interview took place. He also saw an Israeli flag hanging on the wall of the room.

This "chief" of the collaborators was not embarrassed. He did not hesitate to confess to the reporter that he had been

a collaborator with the Israeli security apparatus for four years. He stated that he was prepared to resume his services if the security apparatus asked him. The reporter asked him how he had become a collaborator. He answered: "Persons working in the strike teams asked me to stop working in the settlements. I refused. So they defamed me, wrote my name on the walls of the village, and put beside it 'collaborator with Shin Bet' (the Israeli internal security apparatus). After that, I went to Shin Bet and asked them to supply me with a weapon to protect myself. I offered them all the information I had about the intifadah groups and about my contacts and links with the PLO."

Hamarshah revealed that there are 930 collaborators, their family members and relatives currently living in Fahmah Camp. The "chief collaborator" told THE JERUSALEM POST: "Shin Bet has benefited greatly from collaborators. Because of their efforts, it has been able to fight the intifadah, limit its extent, and keep it from turning into a violent revolution."

The Israeli authorities have adopted the collaborators who have been exposed. Some of them have moved to live in Israel. They live in wretched circumstances, as they are outcasts even from Israeli society. There was an outcry against their presence in Israel after a recently broadcast Israeli television report. The authorities deal with Fahmah Camp as if it were a village like any other village in the West Bank, as the spokesman for the Israeli civil administration said. He added: "The civil administration gave the camp a grant of 10,000 shekels. It installed a telephone line, established a charity association, and paved the street." The intelligence agency supplies collaborators with permits to work in the territories that were occupied in 1948. Most of them work in the building sector.

The brother of the "chief" of the collaborators, Muhammad Hamarshah (age 26) said, "Shin Bet pays a modest salary to those who cannot obtain work permits." Hamarshah indicated that the people in Fahmah "had asked the authorities to install a sewer line and enlarge the classrooms in the existing small school."

The most recent collaborator to have fled is named Sati Sharqawi (age 26). He took refuge in the camp with his wife six months ago after his house was burned. He said: "I was a collaborator for six or seven years. My situation here is good, but if I return to Janin they will kill me immediately."

What most troubles the collaborators now are the increasing chances for implementation of self-rule in the occupied territories. They think about their fate if Israel withdraws. They hold fast to one idea, that their personal fate is tied to Israel's security and that they will move to Jewish cities, rather than Arab ones, for fear of being exposed again.

It remains for us to say that collaborator Hamarshah estimates the number of collaborators in the occupied territories as roughly 2,000. He does not consider it improbable that the Israeli Government may utilize them

to force the Palestinian side to absorb them into the police service now under discussion. This is making the coming phase clearer and clearer.

Gaza Health Office Gives Water Statistics

92AE0646B London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic
29 Aug 92 p 4

[Article by 'Isam al-Shawa: Occupation Authorities Have 20 Locations in Gaza Continuously Pumping Water to Israel']

[Text] The area of the Gaza Strip is 360 square km. Its population is 750,000 people. It is located on the south-eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, between 31.12 and 31.45 degrees north latitude and 34.20 and 34.25 degrees east longitude. The Gaza Strip is 1.33 percent of the total Palestinian territory. The winter season in the Gaza Strip officially begins in November and ends in March. The rains that fall there constitute the principal source of drinking water. It has an average temperature of 21 degrees centigrade, with an average annual humidity of 65 percent, increasing to 62 percent [as published] in August and September. The Gaza Strip is comprised of:

- built-up areas—70,000 dunums
- Jewish settlements—38,000 dunums
- arable land—168,000 dunums
- sand dunes—89,000 dunums

In 1948, the population of the Gaza Strip was 50,000, while the area of land planted with vegetables and citrus trees totaled 10,000 dunums. The influx of refugees probably raised the population figure to close to 350,000, and the increase continued uninterruptedly, until the present figure of 750,000 was reached. The amount of land planted with citrus trees increased from 10,000 to 75,000 dunums. Because water salinity has increased, the planted area has decreased. It is now no more than 40,000 dunums, with maximum production of 250,000 tons. This earns an annual income of \$2 million. This, of course, has contributed to the rapid consumption of the freshwater strata.

The Gaza Strip is situated on two strata of water. The upper stratum carries fresh water, while the lower carries brackish water. The water's salinity ranges from 250 ppm in the north, to 1500 ppm in the south. The rocky strata slopes downward from the east (30 meters below sea level) to the west (110 meters below sea level), to a depth of 400 meters below sea level. There are geological deposits containing large quantities of brackish water, which has a high percentage of salt, between 3,000 and 5,000 ppm.

Demographically, the Gaza Strip represents one of the most densely populated areas. If we exclude Jewish settlements, the population on 233 square km is 3,218 persons per square meter [as published]. In other words, one person has .310 square meters in which to live.

Annual consumption of water at the present time is 100 million cubic meters. The rocky strata occupies about 60 percent of the water, which leaves only 40 million cubic meters.

Perhaps the immoderate withdrawal of water is causing the freshwater layer to dry up. The alternative has been deeper drilling. In addition, rainwater puts pressure on the brackish water, preventing the seawater from passing through the brackish water. Its pollution makes it unfit for human consumption. In the upper rocky layer, there are some pockets of fresh water distributed around the Gaza Strip. From them, citizens obtain drinking water.

The chemical and bacteriological specifications of water in Gaza:

1. A sample of water, unfit for human consumption, which contains more than 40 ppm of chloride, was found in 34 percent of the water wells used by consumers in the city;
2. A sample of unfit water, containing more than 900 ppm of sulphur, was found in 10 percent of the city's wells;
3. A sample of unfit water, containing more than 1.7 ppm of fluoride, was found in 16 percent of the wells;
4. A sample of unfit water, containing more than 50 mg per liter of nitrate (10 mg per liter of nitrogen) was found in 77 percent of the wells;
5. A sample of unfit water, containing more than 100 mg per liter of nitrate was found in 44 percent of the wells;
6. A sample polluted with bacteria was found in 12 percent of the wells.

A study published by the Health Division of the Research Center in Gaza revealed that the level of fluoride in drinking water in the Gaza Strip ranges between 0.8 and 3.8 ppm cubic meters, while the usual permitted ratio in drinking water, according to recommendations of the World Health Organization, is 0.7 to 1.2 ppm cubic meters.

If matters remain like this and no attention is paid to the dangers that await the health of residents in general, and children in particular, then the sewers, in addition to the other dangers, will have an affect on the children. It should be noted that the number of handicapped children is more than 16,000. There are other factors that contribute to this situation, such as malnutrition, ignorance among illiterates, etc.

Up until 1967, the water situation was not a serious danger to the population. No indicators of poor quality or scarcity had appeared. In any event, the Israeli occupation authorities issued a series of military orders, putting restrictions on the testing of water and on earmarking or submitting it for study, which required the approval of the Gaza Strip's military governor general.

Furthermore, new orders imposed strict conditions on digging wells, an activity that was not permitted without official approval. This order also prohibited reclamation and restoration. In 1968, a military order was issued, numbered 291, declaring that all water sources were the property of the military government. This order was issued to conform to the Israeli Government's water laws promulgated in 1959.

Serious action began in 1977, when the loss of the rocky stratum of fresh water became clear. The military government issued an order that placed an embargo on irrigation operations. The harsh embargo measures included penalties such as prison and stiff fines.

There was little need to comply with the law, as long as the water allocated for irrigation did not exceed the need.

Potable water is the responsibility of the municipalities and UNRWA [UN Relief and Works Agency]. In the center of Gaza, Israelis are digging wells in the settlements close to Dayr al-Balah, where best water is found. They are pumping water to "makrut" pipes, but they sell the water to residents in the central Gaza area through which the water pipes pass.

There are a number of wells in 20 locations, which—frighteningly—were dug along the green line that encloses the Gaza Strip. These locations constantly pump water into Israel.

Perhaps the Wadi Gaza, which floods during the rainy season and which starts in Mount Hebron in the east and ends at the coast, between Gaza and Khan Yunis, in the west, has been dammed up by Israel. Several dams have been built in order to prevent the flow of water to the Gaza Strip. This could have provided a valuable source of water because it can be used both for irrigation and human consumption.

There are no figures concerning the amount of water that is collected in this wadi, except that it certainly forms a considerable aid to irrigation operations in the central area of Gaza.

Local consumption in the Gaza Strip during 1991 is estimated at 40 million cubic meters. This does not include the Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip. Water consumption is expected to reach 59 million cubic meters by 2010, when the population has reached 1.025 million. At the present time, local consumption per person per day is 107 liters. However, numbers for Jewish consumption in Israeli settlements are not available. Aside from increased use, the water shortfall is expected to increase, in accordance with need, to 70 million cubic meters in 2010, without taking into account the Israeli settlements, which consume considerably more water for irrigation than the Arabs. Their consumption is twice the consumption of Arab citizens.

All of this reflects the current directions and problems. As to possible solutions, the available options are not easy and will not be easy to achieve. Here are some suggestions, which have been the subject of study:

1. Reuse sewer water through treatment and purifying. The Gaza Strip produces 25 million cubic meters of effluent, from which no benefits are obtained. By this means, more irrigation water could be provided.
2. Build small dams in the wadis.
3. Implement projects to conserve water in several places. The American Refugee Assistance Association (ANIRA) in the Gaza Strip has carried out such projects. These have included collecting rainwater in conduits, which flow into a small artificial lake, to help in augmenting the rocky water strata. This project provides an estimated 1.5 million cubic meters of water for these strata.

4. Implement anti-"osmosis" operations, through which brackish water could be transformed into fresh water to be used for drinking.

5. Remove salt from seawater by desalinization. However, there is no doubt that this method is the costliest to use for the purpose of obtaining fresh water.

A UN expert has made a study of the water situation in the Gaza Strip. He estimated that the Gaza Strip could be in need of drinking water in three or four years. A preliminary study was conducted in 1990 to build a building equipped with the necessary equipment to extract salt from seawater, under UNDP [UN Development Program] supervision. The study proposed constructing a dual-purpose building to produce energy and desalinate seawater. It would be equipped with turbines to generate energy, with a production capability of 50 megawatts, which could be doubled in two later stages. The first stage is based on providing 18 million cubic meters of fresh water annually, with an investment capital of \$180 million. The estimated cost of construction would be \$1 per cubic meter of water. It was suggested that a second unit be built later, at the same cost and in the same location, so that the final total cost would be \$360 million. The two stages would produce 36 million cubic meters of water.

A. The cost would be very high;

B. A shortfall would still exist in fulfilling present requirements, with the population increase, which is expected to reach 1 million by 2000.

The IDA for Limited Technology proposed an alternative project in 1991. This dual-purpose proposal was composed of medium-speed diesel generators to supply 50 megawatts of electricity, which could be doubled with increased desalinization units to provide 18 cubic meters of fresh water per year. The cost per cubic meter of fresh water would be \$.48. A second unit could be built later, which would require the same capital, to produce 36 million cubic meters of fresh water annually, with an annual cost of \$315 million. The cost, therefore, per cubic meter of fresh water would be less than that in the UNDP proposal.

Because implementing such long-range projects would be costly, in addition to taking a long time for implementation, it would be desirable—economically—to avoid desalinizing seawater, as long as there are other sources at a better price.

With regard to the considerable shortage of water in the Gaza Strip and the dire need for water in future years for drinking and irrigation, a compromise must be found. For example, a short-term solution might be gained from removing salt from groundwater by antiosmosis technology. The Gaza Strip has plenty of brackish water, whose salinity ranges from between 500 to more than a milligram of chloride per liter.

Of course, this is not a final solution because it would undoubtedly lower the level of groundwater. However, it could be used safely until the considerable financing is available to implement seawater desalinization projects.

Perhaps the least costly solution, in my view, which would not be impossible but, perhaps, might be difficult to maintain, is to form a joint committee, which would include all conflicting parties, to assume responsibility for water allotment. Such a committee must have the power to buy water from abroad, if the need arises.

Concerning the use of water in Middle East countries, Professor Tulas Naf said at a conference held on 26 June 1990 that "unless the intensity of the crisis is lessened, it will produce the possibility of an outbreak of war." He added: "In the final analysis, water will decide the future of the occupied territories and, consequently, the issue of conflict or peace."

In conclusion, Professor Naf said: "The Gaza Strip's rocky strata are continually deteriorating. There is, in fact, water encroaching from the Mediterranean. If the rocky water strata disappear, it will then seriously affect the rocky water strata near the coasts in the Israeli area because there is a strong possibility that there is a push and shove effect between the two areas. There is serious deterioration in the depletion of rocky water, to such an extent that it has reached the red line."

'Abd-Rabbuh on Peace Talks, Attempts To Distort Stand

JN2809112192 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic
28 Sep 92 pp 20, 17

[Interview with PLO Executive Committee Member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh by Riyadh Mansur; place and date not given]

[Text] Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, head of the PLO Information Department and member of the PLO Executive Committee, has accused the Israeli Government of trying to enter a new Camp David through the peace negotiations.

In an interview with SAWT AL-SHA'B, Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh ruled out that Syria is willing to sign a separate treaty with Israel. He noted that the Israeli delegation is trying to deceive Syria by promising a comprehensive solution on all fronts providing it signs a treaty with it.

He said that the Rabin government's focus on peace negotiations with the Syrians is not aimed at ending the occupation of Syrian territories, but at creating a rift in Arab ranks.

'Abd-Rabbuh said that there is a simple response to the Israeli maneuvers if there is solid will, coordination, and cooperation among all Arab parties.

He added that the round of negotiations which ended in Washington two days ago did not produce any real results because of the Israeli Government's insistence on following Shamir's track. He noted: What has been proposed to us on administrative rule did not and will not represent any serious start to discussing the bases defined in the letter of invitation.

The head of the PLO Information Department said that Rabin's government wants to wrench an Arab recognition that the occupation is legitimate. He noted that during the negotiations, the Palestinian delegation submitted a series

of working papers, stressing that UN Resolution 242 is the basis of the entire peace process. He added: The Israeli side believes that the transitional stage should include options for the future—options which, as we believe, include annexation, continuation of the occupation, and contradiction of UN Resolution 242.

He noted that the Israeli Government does not want to deal seriously with the negotiations because it has got what it wanted and is now awaiting the results of the U.S. elections.

'Abd-Rabbuh revealed that the Israeli Government tried to win the U.S. Administration's support for its administrative rule plan. He noted that Rabin is adopting the policy of the previous Israeli governments by giving priority to Arab-Israeli normalization and imposing a solution that would eliminate the Palestinians' identity, entity, and homeland.

He affirmed that there will be no change in the Palestinian policy in the next round of negotiations. He said that the Israelis must admit that UN Security Council Resolution 242 is the launch pad for the peace process.

He stressed that the Palestinian side will not withdraw from the negotiations and will deal with the Israeli intransigence toward UN Resolution 242 so that this resolution will become the launch pad for peace. He said that the Palestinian stand is solid because it is based on the resolutions of Palestinian legitimacy.

'Abd-Rabbuh said that the PLO will hold contacts and talks with the various concerned Arab parties and states before the next round of negotiations, and that the PLO Central Council will convene to evaluate the previous round of talks.

He added that there are ongoing attempts to distort the national Palestinian position and the PLO's policy with the aim of weakening the Palestinian negotiating stand.

He noted that those behind this campaign are aware that the danger to the national Palestinian stand does not emanate from this stand, but from the attempts to conclude separate solutions that are being cooked in the dark at the expense of the Palestine question in order to besiege the Palestinian delegation and pressure it into relinquishing its goals and national rights.

'Abd-Rabbuh said that this campaign is part of finding an alternative to the PLO under fiery revolutionary slogans. He noted that the Palestinian people are well aware that the PLO leadership and the factions participating in the peace process are now shouldering the responsibility of pursuing this difficult and arduous task to protect national interests and prevent attempts to isolate and weaken the PLO.

Ten Factions in North Lebanon Protest Autonomy Plan

NC2809133492 Shanayh *Voice of the Mountain* in Arabic
1230 GMT 28 Sep 92

[Text] The 10 Palestinian factions in the north held a sit-in outside the offices of the United Nations Relief and Works

Agency for Palestinian Refugees and the International Committee of the Red Cross in Tripoli to protest the autonomy [al-hukm al-dhati] plan. The protesters sent a memorandum to UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali confirming their adherence to the Palestinian people's right to repatriation. They called on him not to give legitimacy to agreements that contradict the national rights of the Palestinian people and that conflict with the principles of international law and human rights.

IRAQ

Four Alleged Security Structures Described

92AE0660A *London AL-WASAT* in Arabic
24 Aug 92 pp 10-13

[Article: "Secret Report Reveals 4 Agencies Control Iraq, Protect Saddam Husayn, Regime"]

[Text] Who protects Iraqi President Saddam Husayn? Who prevents his overthrow or assassination? What agency protects the present Iraqi regime, carries out spy operations against Iraqis and others, suppresses the opposition, and pursues them at home and abroad?

No one dares pose these questions to any Iraqi, either ordinary citizen or official. Everything connected with the secret police, spying, and security organizations in Iraq comes under the heading of "top secret." Therefore, the majority of those interested in this matter, both in the Arab and foreign press, have not been able to write about it with any accuracy or detail so that a clear picture could be given of this closed, secret, and terrifying world, the world of the Iraqi secret police.

AL-WASAT has obtained the text of a secret report, prepared by officials in a major European country that is directly concerned with events in Iraq and that is familiar, more than any other nation, with the affairs of that country and of Saddam Husayn's regime. This report initially was not prepared for publication. On the contrary, it was submitted some weeks ago to a senior official in this country. The report sheds light on the Iraqi secret police and espionage agencies and presents an accurate picture of them. The publication of this report gains special importance now, at a time when the climate apparently is being prepared for a major military operation by the coalition countries against Iraq. This operation would be aimed at, among other goals, an attempt to overthrow Saddam Husayn's regime and assassinate him, if possible. The following are the highlights of this report.

Saddam Husayn rules Iraq through four principal agencies, which are responsible for intelligence, espionage, suppression, and assassination operations and for protecting the Iraqi president. These agencies are:

1. Directorate General of Military Intelligence
2. Directorate General of Civilian and Nonmilitary Intelligence
3. Directorate General of Security
4. Special Security Agency

The Iraqi intelligence agencies are subordinate to the Revolutionary Command Council. The Special Security Committee was formed in the latter part of the 1980's for the purpose of coordinating activities among the various intelligence agencies involved with internal security, to define their tasks with regard to national security, to supervise their activities, and to prevent any of them from greatly increasing their authority. According to information recently leaked from Baghdad to foreign capitals, it is possible that a Ministry of National Security will be created in the near future. This will cause supervision over internal security agencies to be centralized, unified, and firmly connected with this ministry.

The question of the Iraqi secret police agencies and their operations should be considered on the basis of an integrated, powerful system, especially with regard to domestic security, an important and vital problem. It is difficult to discuss this subject in detail because of a lack of adequate data. It is clear that the entire apparatus works to protect the regime. There is an overlapping of certain jurisdictions with others (which is especially clear in connection with General Intelligence and Public Security). However, concentration on the agencies' responsibilities differs according to the fields. While the missions of Public Security and General Intelligence concentrate on security and counterintelligence of a special kind (the latter agency also operates abroad), personnel of military intelligence primarily concentrate on situational intelligence, such as gathering information in countries that are "hostile to Iraq," conducting investigations, and giving the regime and Army early warnings.

According to the special data that we have obtained, it is apparent that there has been no structural or organizational change in the Iraqi secret police structure since the Gulf war, despite the fact that it is possible that secondary changes may have occurred within the agencies.

Military Intelligence

I. The Directorate General of Military Intelligence

The Directorate General of Military Intelligence is subordinate to the Operations Branch in Saddam Husayn's general headquarters. Military Intelligence has the following principal missions:

- Ensure Army loyalty to the regime
- Supervise security and counterintelligence in the Army
- Suppress signs of opposition in the army and civilian sector
- Collect situational intelligence in hostile countries (such as Iran and Israel)
- Conduct research concerning military intelligence in countries hostile to Iraq
- Be concerned with strategic and tactical intelligence, which could reveal intentions of aggression by countries hostile to Iraq
- Design psychological war and deception plans and carry them out
- Cooperate in the intelligence field with foreign intelligence agencies
- Implement intelligence and terrorist operations against hostile targets. (For example, in the early 1980's, military attaches in Western Europe were involved in terrorist operations and in planning to carry out attacks against Iranian and Kurdish targets and against persons hostile to Saddam Husayn's regime.)

Military intelligence is composed of a group of units with varying activities, beginning with gathering data and conducting research and studies and including technological development of intelligence, organizing foreign relations, etc.

A special "agency" has been created, subordinate to Military Intelligence, to operate in the various regions of Iraq, from the north to the south, and in the east, west, and central areas. It carries out different tasks, according to requirements and circumstances.

The units, of which Military Intelligence is composed, carry out the following tasks:

- A unit to supervise the combat aspects of intelligence activities
- A unit to manage agents at home and another to manage agents abroad
- A unit for electronic warfare operations, including monitoring and intercept
- A unit responsible for military attaché offices abroad
- A unit of air corps personnel
- Other units to carry out secondary tasks

Civilian Intelligence

II. Civilian and nonmilitary intelligence is directly subordinate to President Saddam Husayn. Its director works under his supervision. General Intelligence is considered the most important intelligence agency in Iraq with regard to internal security. The counterintelligence apparatus is connected with this directorate. A person close to Saddam Husayn was recently appointed to manage counterintelligence, which demonstrates the importance that the regime attaches to this agency's role vis-a-vis internal security.

The Directorate General of Intelligence carries out the following primary tasks:

- Counterespionage and monitoring internal security; supervising civilians and political activities of the Ba'th Party, its branches, and other political organizations; supervising minorities (Kurds, Assyrians, Shiites, and others), suppressing opposition within these minorities; and, supervising foreigners (Arabs and non-Arabs) inside Iraq, preventing the occurrence of any spying operation, and preventing them from carrying out sabotage activities.
- Collecting situational information of a special type through agents located in centers abroad and through operations rooms located on the borders. In the past, before the Gulf crisis, this referred to collecting information in cooperation with certain foreign intelligence agencies.
- Sabotage and terrorist operations against hostile countries (especially Syria, Iran, and Egypt) and

against the opposition (Kurds, for example). These activities include aggressive and terrorist operations, military, logistics, and financial assistance to opposition organizations in a number of states hostile to Baghdad.

- Purchasing of equipment and arms for their use in nontraditional weapons industries, especially through existing relations with international arms dealers and foreign companies in Eastern and Western Europe.
- Psychological warfare and acts of espionage and terrorism against the enemies of Saddam Husayn and his regime.

The main headquarters for General Intelligence consists of bureaus that carry out direct operations in the fields of information gathering, counterespionage, research, foreign relations, supervision over political activities, operations and investigations, technical spying, and administration. General Intelligence is deployed throughout Iraq through a dense network of intelligence centers in various areas and sectors. These centers carry out all General Intelligence missions in the assigned area. Abroad, General Intelligence operates through spy centers under cover of Iraqi embassies and civilian organizations that are subordinate to or cooperating with Iraq.

General Directorate for Security

III. The General Directorate of Public Security is subordinate to the Ministry of Interior. It is headed by Saddam Husayn's brother, the former director of general intelligence. Public Security is responsible for matters of internal security and counterespionage. There is considerable similarity between its activities and the activities of General Intelligence. The role of the Directorate General of Security, as a semisecret security agency and as a police agency, causes its personnel to constantly be in contact with the people, who have become accustomed to the officers of the Directorate General of Security and their frightening methods, despite the fact that their activities are done in secrecy.

The responsibilities of the Directorate General of Public Security include the following:

- Surveillance of civilians and foreigners, political activities, minorities, and foreign diplomatic missions;
- Prevention of sabotage operations, terrorism, espionage, and criminal activities in Iraq.

In order to implement its mission, the directorate carries out covert and overt activities, making use of agents for domestic security missions and spying operations concerning surveillance of individuals, covert searches of places and houses, telephone taps, and interrogations.

Special Security Agency

IV. The Special Security Agency was established in the mid-1980's, after an attempt to assassinate Saddam Husayn was carried out by those "close" to him. Therefore, this agency is most important, since its responsibilities lie in the following fundamental areas:

- Guaranteeing protection for Saddam Husayn
- Protecting facilities subordinate to the Iraqi Presidency
- Supervising security of the other secret police structures
- Supervise activities of governmental offices and agencies, including Iraqi missions abroad.
- Monitor the Army, especially its leadership and senior officers.
- Supervise relations with "terrorist" organizations.

The activities of the Special Security Agency are cloaked in extreme secrecy. However, the main centers are manned by persons selected by Saddam Husayn himself, including some members of his family.

The agency's main headquarters has scores of officers and troops who, in addition to secret police operations, also perform military functions within the framework of internal security. The agency includes a section pertaining to the general military armed forces, within the scope of forces specifically to protect Saddam Husayn's offices and residences, government installations, television and radio stations, Baghdad airport, etc. There is a special section to maintain cooperation and action with units of the Republican Guard, tasked especially with defending the regime.

In fact, the Special Security Agency protects Saddam Husayn from any attempt to assassinate him or from any subversive act, either from within the Army, from within the "family", or from within the government establishment. This agency's powers exceed the power of any other agency in Iraq today. The officials of this agency enjoy a very favored position with Saddam Husayn.

Inability To Spy

The various Iraqi secret police agencies were hard hit during the second Gulf War. As a result of damages received during the second Gulf War, the Iraqi Air Force's capabilities to carry out spy operations were reduced considerably.

Iraqi Air Force spy operations, before the war, included reconnaissance, photographic, and other operations. In these spy operations, the Air Force used several types of military aircraft, helicopters, and radio-guided aircraft (MiG-25, MiG-21, Mirage F-1, M-8 helicopters, and IL-76 photographic aircraft). It is difficult to determine the extent of damages inflicted on these aircraft. However, it is worth noting that the Iraqi Air Force demonstrated its spying capability against Israel in 1989, in cooperation with the Jordanian Air Force, as well as during the period of tension that preceded the Gulf war. However, it is apparent that these capabilities are no longer available today. Iraq has also lost the ability to spy, from the air, against certain Arab states.

Iraqi surveillance capabilities suffered damage during the Gulf war. It is worth pointing out that before the war the surveillance apparatus included 20 units, all of battalion size. A section of these units was subordinate to General Headquarters of Military Intelligence, Electronic Warfare Operations. With regard to equipment employed, most of

it was Soviet or Hungarian, along with some Western-made equipment of a special type imported from France, Germany, and Britain. This equipment (monitoring and locating intelligence posts) included speech, telegraphic, and Morse intelligence, on a number of wave lengths. In addition to monitoring Iranian, Turkish, and Syrian intelligence, this apparatus also monitored Israeli intelligence on a specific wavelength. Capabilities were developed to collect information during the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980's, and the information was rapidly transmitted to intelligence officers and used by the Air Force and Artillery Corps to launch attacks on the Iranian Army. At the same time, other sources confirm the truth of this information (monitoring stations and aerial photography). One should recall that information pertaining to Iraqi monitoring operations was very limited during the Gulf war.

During the fighting, the intelligence agencies joined the General Headquarters, brigades, divisions, and corps to carry out espionage operations behind enemy lines (on the General Headquarters and Corps level) and at the fronts. During the Iran-Iraq war, the Iraqi spy agencies demonstrated their capabilities, especially with regard to collecting information, detaining enemy troops, and sabotage and commando operations. Elements to collect information, which were available to Iraqi intelligence organizations on the military division and corp level, were relatively numerous and varied. They included reconnaissance battalions and specialized reconnaissance units (engineers, artillery, aerial photo analysis), in addition to information sent by the command and tactical information provided by intelligence organizations, which were carried out by military intelligence and other agencies deployed in the area. Despite that, the contribution of intelligence pertaining to the military situation during the second Gulf war was extremely limited.

Cooperation with Foreign Intelligence

The Gulf war, and the widespread Arab and international isolation from which Saddam Husayn's regime suffers, has principally affected Iraq's capabilities in the areas of espionage, intelligence, and information gathering:

- Military attache offices and Iraqi intelligence centers in a large number of Arab and foreign countries were closed as a result of the Gulf crisis, and, even today, this "network" has not been revived.
- The covert cooperation that existed between Iraqi intelligence agencies and a number of Arab and foreign intelligence agencies prior to the Gulf crisis has ceased.
- Cooperation between Iraqi agencies and Jordanian organizations has been reduced considerably in recent times. Jordan is no longer a "primary area" for Iraqi intelligence activities, although the intelligence organizations have a presence in Amman and in specific circles in Jordan. There is still an "exchange of

information" between Jordanians and Iraqis with regard to Israel and its activities.

- "Cooperation" between Iraqi agencies and intelligence organizations of the PLO or of certain other Palestinian organizations has also been reduced in recent months. There are still Palestinian individuals who cooperate with Iraqi agencies, either in the occupied Arab territories or in certain other countries. However, in this regard, it must be said that Iraqi intelligence did not put major importance on Palestinian intelligence information, even before the Gulf crisis.
- Before the occupation of Kuwait and the resulting crisis, the Iraqi regime was primarily interested in Israel. The Iraqis used Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, or in Israel itself, to gather information about Israel. Iraq also used a number of "foreign agents", particularly Europeans including those whom the Iraqi intelligence apparatus sent to Israel to carry out specific missions. These agents' missions included collecting information pertaining to Israeli forces, and military and war industries in Israel. They also included collecting information about Israeli strategic and military installations.

Prior to the invasion of Kuwait, the Iraqis were eager to collect information about possible targets in Israel that they could strike. However, the Iraqi regime was unable to hit any Israeli military targets during the Gulf War.

JORDAN

'Arar Heads New 'Party of the Future' Merger

93P40006A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
22 Sep 92 p 2

[Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—It was announced yesterday in Amman that the "National Future" and "New Arabs" parties have merged under the name "Party of the Future," with the election of Sulayman 'Arar as the party's secretary general.

It may be recalled that Sulayman 'Arar had already founded a "Party of the Future" last year. The party's founders included former Prime Minister Tahir al-Masri. Al-Masri separated from the Party of the Future at the beginning of this year with the aim of founding [another] Party of the Future called the "New Arabs," whose membership included a number of Palestinian financiers.

Informed party sources noted that al-Masri had encountered organizational difficulties in his party, which was dissolved without continuing the party's mission. This forced him to return to the ranks of the Party of the Future, which is also facing serious dissension in its ranks, starting with the departure of dozens of its leaders and founders. It may be recalled that Tahir al-Masri is a member of the National Bloc in the House of Representatives, which Sulayman 'Arar leads.

Parliamentarians Begin Positioning for Elections

92AE0631A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
30 Aug 92 p 3

[Text] Amman—Jordanian parliamentary blocs have begun consultations among themselves to elect a Chamber of Deputies speaker for the ordinary parliamentary session scheduled to begin in early October.

As soon as the extraordinary session, which failed to hold its last meeting last Tuesday because of the lack of a quorum, ended, serious thought began to focus on the next ordinary session and the question of who is going to sit in the speaker's seat.

Although this parliamentary activity is not yet organized on the basis of official statements, which are usually issued by the parliamentary blocs regarding the nomination of candidates, the most prominent names being mentioned as individuals willing to fight for the speakership, both inside and outside the blocs, are Dr. 'Abd al-Latif 'Arabiyyat, the present speaker; 'Abd-al-Karim al-Dughmi, a deputy from al-Mafraq Governorate and a former minister; and 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Rawabidah, also a former minister.

With regard to Dr. 'Arabiyyat, it is obvious so far that the Islamic movement, to which he belongs, will support his election for a third term in order to secure its chairmanship of the Chamber until its term ends in next December. As for 'Abd-al-Karim al-Dughmi, it is not yet known whether the Democratic Alliance, to which he belongs, will officially support him or whether it is ready to enter into a dialogue with the other blocs in order to win more deputies' votes in his favor. What applies to al-Dughmi also applies to al-Rawabidah, because the Constitutional Bloc, to which he belongs, had previously, under the leadership of Dhuqan al-Hindawi, deputy prime minister and minister of higher education, aligned itself with the Islamic movement and supported its nominee, Dr. 'Abd al-Latif 'Arabiyyat. Therefore, it is not yet clear whether nominating al-Rawabidah to the Constitutional Bloc chairmanship would in fact lead to asking the Islamic bloc deputies to reciprocate by supporting its nominee to the speakership. Parliamentary sources have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that this is what is being proposed now concerning the next speakership. This might not be final, because deputies from other blocs might nominate themselves for this position.

In another development, the first of its kind in Jordan since the National Charter that permitted political plurality in Jordan was adopted, a number of tribal leaders, following the endorsement of parties law, hastened to form a political grouping under the name of "Jordan National Alliance." It is noted from the tone of the statement issued by the Alliance's constituent meeting that the declaration forming this party came soon after bilateral meetings, which were attended by a limited number of people, were held in various parts of Jordan. The parties saw the need to hasten the formation of the Alliance in order to gain time and therefore give Jordanian citizens who wish to join it

the opportunity to do so. The Alliance's constituent committee remained in open session in order to enable members who have grass-roots support in their hometowns to join the Alliance. One of the distinguishing things about the formation of the Alliance is the enthusiasm shown by al-Huwaytat tribes (southern bedouins) and al-Sukhur tribes (central bedouins) for the Alliance to succeed.

Mijhim al-Khurayshah, brother of the famous Shaykh Nayif al-Khurayshah, was elected Alliance's secretary general at the constituent meeting. Mijhim al-Khurayshah has been a governor, director of the Jordanian crown prince's office, and a Cabinet counselor, a post that he continues to hold.

The interesting thing in this new development is that this is an alliance of a tribal character and nature, which clearly means that it will win broad grass-roots support in various parts of Jordan.

Deputies Begin Submitting Nominations for Next Speaker

93P40002A

[Editorial Report] London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic of 25 September 1992 on page 4 reports from Amman that parliamentary circles are beginning to talk about electing the House of Representatives speaker for the next session.

Two names have already been put forth for the position. The first is Shaykh 'Abd-al-Baqi Jammu, deputy from the City of al-Zarqa, who is "attached to the Muslim Brotherhood movement." The second is Dr. Muhammad 'Addub al-Zabn, deputy for the central Bedouins, who is associated with the National Bloc. The Muslim Brotherhood has not yet announced its position, but it is understood that they will nominate current speaker Dr. 'Abd-al-Latif 'Arabiyyat. The National Democratic Front [name as published] also has not yet announced its position on the elections.

Survey Gauges People's Attitude Toward Parties

93P40003A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
30 Sep 92 p 4

[Text] Amman—The political and party formations yesterday began to submit requests to found political parties to the Interior Ministry in accordance with the new parties law after its official passage. The Public Opinion Survey Unit of the PETRA [press] agency has conducted a survey to learn citizens' positions and opinions on the political parties. The results show that only 14.4 percent of those who completed the survey are members of the parties under formation, and 55.6 percent are not even thinking of joining the parties. However, 36.3 percent did not have a position on joining parties. The results also affirmed that 53.8 percent of the sample believe that there is a connection between partisanship and family ties. Fourteen percent had no opinion. As for the expected party press, 46 percent said that it will not succeed, and 22.8 percent did not have an opinion. In the comments of those completing the survey, it was noted that the parties are far removed

from the people. Anyone who founds a party looks to his family and relatives to garner a broad base for his party; as a result, there would be no real change in the social structure.

New Parties Begin Registering, Forming Blocs

93AE0010A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
1 Oct 92 p 4

[Article: "Now That Door to Party Registration in Jordan Has Been Opened, Extensive Activities to Merge Small Blocs"]

[Text] Amman—Registration of political parties will begin this morning at the special directorate the Ministry of Interior has set aside exclusively for party affairs. The registration process begins one full month after a royal decree was issued at the beginning of last month ratifying the parties law.

Numerous party figures have been actively engaged in contacts on merging the small parties in bigger parties now that it has become evident that many of those who had sought to form party organizations have failed to enlist enough individuals willing to join and pay annual subscriptions.

The Party for Progress and Justice, which has appointed former Minister Zayd Hamzah as its secretary, has completed its foundation steps. The most prominent member of this party is Dr. 'Adnan Abu-'Awdah, Jordan's permanent UN delegate, who has been in Amman for a long vacation that seems to be connected with the matter. Al-'Ahd [Covenant] Party, which is led by former General Security Director 'Abd-al-Hadi al-Majali, is making preparations to register during the first few days of the month.

The bloc known as the Popular Democratic [Bloc] is preparing to register as a party by the same name. Meanwhile, the Muslim Brotherhood is drafting the final version of the manifesto and constitution of its party, which it will call the Islamic Action Party.

Also emerging in the arena are also the activities of a bloc that calls itself the National Liberal Party, led by Deputy Sulayman 'Arar [or 'Arrar]. It has been learned that this bloc will merge with another bloc to form a party named the Party for the Future, to which the Unionist Democrats Bloc, represented by Anis al-Mu'ashshir, may accede. The new party is characterized by a pan-Arabist tendency, and it has attracted large numbers of Christian citizens in particular. Women are entering party organizations and playing a role in their activities, led by Dr. Huda Fakhuri, who is said to be working to establish a party under the name of the Democratic Arab National Jordanian Party.

The Ba'thists who are split into two factions, namely a faction affiliated with the Ba'th Party in Syria and a faction affiliated with the Ba'th Party in Iraq, are positioned in the opposite arena. Neither faction has defined its position yet.

In a related development, a royal decree has been issued postponing convocation of the fourth session of the current Jordanian National Assembly until 1 December 1992. In

accordance with the Jordanian Constitution, this session was supposed to begin today.

Parliamentary sources have said that when the National Assembly's next session begins, King Husayn of Jordan will deliver to the Assembly, which includes the Senate and the House of Representatives, an address in which he will review Jordan's viewpoint on the current developments in the Arab and international arenas and on the developments of the peace process in light of the bilateral negotiations between the Arab countries and Israel.

Even though these sources have not explained the reason for postponing convocation of the Assembly's forthcoming session, it is believed that the postponement is due to reasons connected with current developments in the Jordanian arena and developments of the region's peace process.

Increased Phosphate Exports to East Europe Expected

92AE0631B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
30 Aug 92 p 10

[Text] Amman—The Jordanian Phosphate Company expects to increase its phosphates exports in 1992 as a result of resuming exports to Russia, Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria. Phosphate exports stopped last year because of political and economic changes in Eastern Europe, some of whose countries were the biggest Jordanian phosphate importers.

The value of phosphate and potash exported at the end of the first quarter of this year totaled 61 million dinars. The total value of phosphate exports during 1991 was 228 million dinars. The value of exports to the East European countries during the same period was 27 million dinars, of which 17 million were to Russia.

Efforts are being made to resume phosphate exports to the East European countries in order to pay for the meat and raw materials Jordan imports from them. However, increasing the volume of Jordanian exports in 1992 will depend on exporting to Iraq and on approval by the Security Council Sanctions Committee of the commodities that can be exported. It also depends on the committee's approval of importing oil from Iraq in order to pay for the exports.

Strict measures are now being applied on exports to Iraq, which traditionally is a market for Jordanian exports.

The Jordanian Government is looking into easing the slump in exports by exporting to Iran in exchange for imports from that country. Jordanian industries will participate in the Tehran International Fair, which will take place in October of this year, in order to open the Iranian market for Jordanian commodities.

The indications are that the value of Jordanian imports this year will total \$2.7 billion, an increase of \$300 million, or 10 percent, from 1991, because of the need for food-stuffs and consumer goods, in particular. Balancing the statement of account depends on foreign aid, income from tourism, and remittances from citizens working abroad.

The remittances total between \$200 million and \$300 million a year, compared with \$500 million to \$600 million a year before the Gulf crisis.

Al-'Aqabah Blockade Cuts Phosphate Shipments by Half

93P40005A Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 23 Sep 92 p 2

[Text] Amman, PETRA—The al-'Aqabah Railroad Authority's committee on tenders held a meeting yesterday. The meeting's chairman was Engineer 'Awad al-Tal, secretary general of the Transportation Ministry. During the meeting, it was agreed to purchase spare parts for the authority's railcars.

Mr. Muhammad Muhyi-al-Din Kurayshan, the authority's general manager, mentioned that, from the beginning of the year to the end of August, the authority's railcars carried 1,875,108 tons of phosphate from the mines to the Port of al-'Aqabah. He said that the authority plans to transport a monthly average of 300,000 tons of phosphate from the various mines to the Port of al-'Aqabah. He said that this plan was successful in the first third of this year, transporting approximately 782,881 tons. However, the authority encountered a 49-percent decrease in transport activity in the second third of this year because ships did not arrive at the Port of al-'Aqabah as a result of the naval blockade of the port. He indicated that 250,793 tons of phosphate were transported in August.

Steps Taken To Transfer Foreign Currency Abroad

92AE0631C London AL-WASAT in Arabic 24 Aug 92 p 10

[Text] Foreign currency control policy in Jordan is continuing. The latest step in this regard is a memo by the Central Bank that defines the right of banks, insurance companies, industrial and commercial companies, and ordinary persons to transfer currency by for investment in the Arab countries, on condition of mutual treatment by the Arab countries concerned. The necessary foreign currency should be provided from those persons' own resources.

According to the memo that the banks and financial companies received, payment of bills for goods received in the free or transit zones is prohibited. Granting credit facilities directly in Jordanian dinars or foreign currency for the purpose of financing imports into free or transit zones also is not allowed, and payment of the value of goods imported into the free or transit zones should come from the client's own sources.

The recent memo is one of the steps taken by the Jordanian Government to restrict what the currency authorities call the exploitation by some banks and companies of the opportunity to smuggle currency abroad.

Seminar Estimates Unemployment at 18 Percent

93AE0010C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 31 Aug 92 p 43

[Article: "18 Percent Unemployment in Jordan"]

[Text] Studies submitted to a seminar on Jordanian "repatriates from the Gulf states" have unanimously estimated Jordan's unemployment at 18 to 19 percent of the country's workforce.

A study submitted to the seminar estimates the workforce volume in Jordan at 875,000 workers, compared with 650,000 job opportunities available to Jordanians, including 500,000 opportunities filled by Jordanians and 150,000 by repatriates.

A study by the Ministry of Labor said that the country's unemployment rate stood at 5 percent when there were 320,000 Jordanians working the Arab Gulf states, especially in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the UAE.

The number of unemployed is estimated currently at 165,000 people. But unofficial estimates speak of 300,000 unemployed because of the lack of opportunities, on the one hand, and the disinclination of Jordanians to work in certain sectors, which are ordinarily filled by Egyptians, Syrians, and Asians who work for low wages.

Government Spends 200 Million Dinars on Construction

93AE0010B Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 16 Sep 92 p 3

[Article: "Government Construction Projects Valued at 200 Million Dinars This Year"]

[Text] Amman—PETRA—The value of government tenders in the construction area amounted to nearly 175 million dinars from the beginning of this year to the end of last August.

Engineer Bashir al-Jaghbir, general director of the Government Tenders Department, has stated that nearly 68 million dinars of the work value has been in the construction of buildings, including 40 million dinars in the educational sector, 23 million dinars in road construction, and 17 million dinars in the area of water and sewers.

Al-Jaghbir added that 65 percent of these projects have been financed by the state treasury and 26 percent by loans. He said that 98 percent of the projects have been awarded to Jordanian contractors.

Al-Jaghbir also pointed out that public sector projects valued at nearly 82 million dinars are expected to be awarded to contractors before the end of this year.

MAURITANIA

Demographic Statistics Detailed, Analyzed

93AF0008A Nouakchott HORIZONS in French 2 Sep 92 p 3

[Article by Baba Dianfa Traore: "The Demographic Situation in Mauritania: A Population Which Is Still a Young One"]

[Text] Mauritania's very young population is unequally spread out over an area of 1,030,000 square kilometers. By the year 2010 it is estimated that the country will have to feed 3.6 million people, or a 2.9-percent rate in overall population growth.

This is the finding of a document entitled: *La Situation démographique de la Mauritanie* [Mauritania's Demographic Situation] drawn up by the head of the demographic and social statistics department of the National Statistical Office (ONS).

In 1991 Mauritania's population was estimated to be 2.1 million people, making an average density of 2 inhabitants per square kilometer. Several census efforts, particularly those in 1977 and 1988, make it possible to have a clear notion of the size of the national population. To this should be added the national survey on fertility carried out in 1981 and the survey on maternal and child health carried out in 1990.

Furthermore, the country's overall population experienced a 2.17-percent growth between 1965 and 1977 and a 2.93-percent growth between 1977 and 1988.

According to this document, if we exclude immigration figures, we see that births remain the sole factor responsible for the population increase, with the arrival into the world of new mouths to feed. The raw birthrate is estimated at 48 per thousand.

In our country fertility is also one reason for population growth. Fertility basically is about the reproductive capacity of women between the ages of 15 and 49.

Furthermore, the different demographic sources available in Mauritania show that fertility is very high. In all cases, people disappear from the population when there are demographic events such as death and emigration.

The raw mortality rate in our country is estimated to be 19 per thousand. Other indices can thus be calculated if we have a breakdown of deaths by age. These indices could, for example, be life expectancy, the infant mortality rate or even the child mortality rate, because mortality exhibits major age differentials.

Such indices provide reliable indicators of peoples' standard of living and health conditions. They also cast light on the country's level of economic and social development.

In Mauritania a precise knowledge of mortality is still handicapped by the frequently bad method of reporting deaths. Lacking a reliable civil registration system, estimates of mortality currently come from indirect practices using retrospective questions pertaining to the past 12 or 24 months.

Recourse to this type of reporting creates an underestimate of deaths because, for example, of a refusal to report sad events. Despite their limits, these indirect methods make it possible to approximate mortality levels.

The improvement of hygienic conditions and the struggle against the major endemic diseases have significantly helped lower mortality in our country. Despite this drop, life expectancy at birth remains below the average for Africa, which was 53 in mid-1991. [Mauritania's] life expectancy is approaching the average in West Africa, which is 49 years.

Mauritania's population is still a very young one. This is shown by the age pyramid, which has a triangular form with a big base. This detail shows the large proportion of young people among the population. All this is the result of the importance of growth potential.

In 1988, for example, persons under the age of 15 accounted for 44 percent of the population, whereas those above the age of 65 accounted for only 4 percent.

In another area, the process of the sedentarization of nomads accelerated between 1965 and 1988. This undoubtedly resulted in a swelling of cities.

In 1988 it was observed that all major wilayas had experienced unprecedented growth. The wilaya of Nouakchott alone is home to more than one-fifth of the country's total population.

Mauritania's population is well-known for its high mobility. Thus internal emigration represents 30.5 percent. Men migrate more than woman, with migration rates of 32.6 and 28.6 percent, respectively.

In Nouakchott the migration rate is 73.3 percent. That means that seven out of 10 residents of Nouakchott are not natives of Nouakchott.

The demographic situation in our country deserves to be continually drawn into national economic policy. Generally speaking, the demographic and planning dynamics should be looked at in the same way. Just as we should not forget to link them with economic and social development.

MOROCCO

Referendum: MAP Commentary on Press Response

92AF1270A Rabat L'OPINION in French 9 Sep 92 pp 1, 3

[Article by Khalid Jamaï: "Some Necessary Comments"]

[Text] Maghreb-Arab Press Agency (MAP) on 8 September published a commentary in which it analyzed the positions taken by the newspapers AL-ALAM, AL-ITTihad AL-ICHTIRAKI, and L'OPINION on the results of the referendum of 4 September. In accordance with journalistic ethics we publish below the text of the MAP commentary.

In publishing this commentary MAP abandoned its neutrality, even though it was quite relative, and in this way became a participant in the political debate that our country is experiencing.

That is a choice for MAP to make. However, it is a choice that implies responsibilities and places it on a certain side. Did it legally have the right to do this? The question deserves to be asked. Having said this, we wish to make several remarks on the commentary in question:

1) MAP wrote: "The three newspapers referred to are trying to cast doubt on the results of the referendum." It would be appropriate to make clear that we did not "try." Rather, we raised a doubt about the results. Our different comments on it are evidence of this.

2) It is not only these three newspapers that challenged these results. The newspaper ANOUAL also carried an article under an eight-column headline on 6 September, which read: "The government is falsifying the will of the people by 97.29 percent."

This was also the case with the newspaper AL BAYANE, which wrote in its editorial of 7 September under the headline, "Surrealism and Realism," as follows:

"The participation of 97.4 percent of the voters did a great service to the new constitution. This left 320,415 voters who did not participate, including the sick, those not at home, travelers, and members and supporters of the four political parties and the two trade unions who called on the people not to vote!..."

"Yes, this was a great service to democracy, to the country, and to its image. Everyone could have accepted it and could have taken it better if the results of the referendum were credible, instead of reminding those participating and observers of the referendum of results worthy of the USSR of the period before perestroika.

"In only one way could this result have been credible and acceptable: if all of the political parties had said 'yes.' That was not the case, and it was because of this that we carried a warning in every editorial that we published this week. That is how the constitution that was presented, a modern document, broadly supported in quite good faith, and faded from view, like something hidden, was spattered with mud by a surrealist vote."

In the same edition Ismail Aloui wrote: "In effect, it is quite conceivable that the 'yes' vote reached and exceeded the level of 90 percent of those voting, given the fact that none of the national political parties called on the people to vote 'no.' On the other hand the level of participation, stated to be 97.23 percent of the registered voters, seems at least to have been excessive, with this excess amounting to between 7 and 10 percent of the registered voters. This view, which cannot be scientific in the absence of irrefutable, specific data, seems closest to reality in our society."

Is it necessary to state that the PPS [Party of Progress and Socialism], which publishes AL BAYANE, recommended a "yes" vote? This is an attitude that we respect, even though we did not share it.

We are limiting ourselves to these dailies and we refuse to cite the foreign press that covered this event.

3) Moreover, the referendums which have taken place since 1962 and to which MAP refers have always been affected by irregularities. And this is what the opposition has never ceased denouncing.

Furthermore, the emphasis placed both by the highest officials of the state as well as by the opposition on the establishment of supervisory committees provides definite evidence of the fact that the previous elections were not really clean, to say the least.

If the situation had been normal in the past, it would not have been necessary to establish these committees and to state that future elections would take place under fully open circumstances.

4) Continuing its commentary, MAP stated: "The rank-and-file members of these parties (this refers to the opposition parties) only listened to the call of duty and of reason by voting 'yes' on a massive scale."

If this were the case, which remains to be proved, these parties should have disappeared from the Moroccan political map, because they would have been disavowed by their rank-and-file members. Now, these parties continue to exist and, on several occasions, have proved that they were truly alive and that they still have broad support among the people.

5) Furthermore, it is false to state that, "at the time of the referendum of 4 September no party advocated or even campaigned for a 'no' vote or for abstention from voting."

This campaign well and truly took place. It is enough to refer to the opposition newspapers, from which we quote the following headlines:

- L'OPINION, 1 September: "UGTM [General Union of Moroccan Workers] and CDT [Democratic Labor Confederation] Call on Working Class and the Masses of the People Not To Participate in the Referendum."
- L'OPINION, 4 September: "Political Parties and Trade Unions Call for Nonparticipation in the Vote on the Draft Constitution."
- ANOUAL, 2 September: "OADP [Organization for a Democratic and Popular Action] Calls on Citizens Not To Participate in the Referendum on 4 September."
- AL ALAM, 4 September: "National Democratic Political Parties and Organizations, Including PI, USFP [Socialist Union of Popular Forces], OADP, UNFP [National Union of Popular Forces], UGTM, and CDT Call on Moroccans Not To Participate in the Vote on the Draft Constitution."

6) MAP adds: "The entry onto the scene of young people 20 years old who had recently registered to vote noticeably increased the size of the electorate by adding a new, strong, and responsible group of voters."

We agree with that but we should add that, although the voting age was lowered to include 18-year-olds, as has happened in other countries, modern Morocco, in which 60 percent of the population is under 20, could have been better represented and the voting register "expanded."

In the same way, the opposition "never sought to deprive anyone of his right to vote." This is because abstaining from voting is also one way of using your right to vote. We might add to that that it was specifically the role of these young people which was decisive in the conclusion reached by the opposition political parties' of advocating nonparticipation in the vote.

7) The MAP commentary added: "We can understand the strong interest of the Moroccan people in an election in which the king has called on them to vote 'Yes.'"

Certainly, the king called on the Moroccan people to vote "yes." However, as he respects the popular will, he left the choice up to the Moroccan people, regarding it as a matter for decision in their own minds.

8) Consequently, the statement that, "We note that the rank-and-file members of the political parties and the trade unions and deputies of different political parties voted massively in all election districts," calls for the following comment: as a voter's card does not mention the political or trade union affiliation of the bearer, we may well ask ourselves how they came to know how this member of the Istiqlal [Independence] Party (PI), that independent, that member of the UNFP, that member of the UGTM, that member of the PPS, or that member of the People's Movement actually voted. Does not asking this question really answer it?"

MAP has the right to call the commentators in AL ALAM, L'OPINION, and AL ITTIHAD AL ICHTIRAKI sceptics. However, this is a value judgment, and, as such, it is not worth very much.

Now, more specifically, we were not sceptics because of the fact that we did not believe or have blind confidence in what we heard or read.

We analyzed the referendum results issued by the Ministry of the Interior in a rational way, while calling on people to use simple good sense. We demonstrated that these figures were "surrealistic," to use the expression of AL BAYANE.

By doing so we did not insult the intelligence of the Moroccan people. We only proved that the problem that we raised had nothing to do with loyalty, as AL BAYANE said in its edition of 8 September, sharing the position that we expressed on 7 September: "The referendum was understood and perceived by the government to be a plebiscite. The government was wrong." The referendum was not a plebiscite but only a means of consulting the people on the text of a draft law, that is, the constitution.

Finally, in the name of what can it be stated that you cannot "imagine a single occasion when (the people) could hesitate or abstain from saying 'Yes' to the draft revision of the constitution submitted to them for their view."

Saying that amounts to considering that the opposition parties and the trade unions (including their leaders, members, and sympathizers) who chose to support abstaining from or boycotting the referendum are not a part of the people, which amounts to excluding them from consideration. This antidemocratic attitude is full of danger.

For expressing a contrary view is not something criminal and does not make us outcasts. Quite the contrary, the existence of differences is a sign of the vitality and existence of a confrontation of ideas. This is because, once again, the subject was a draft law that calls on each one of

us to reflect on it, to give it real consideration, and calls on us to exercise our free judgment.

N.B.: As we had the honesty to publish the full text of the MAP commentary, we hope that they will do the same thing for us.

Text of MAP Commentary on the Vote on 4 September

The newspapers AL-ALAM, AL-ITTIHAD AL-ICHTIRAKI, and L'OPINION are trying to cast doubt on the results of the referendum on the revised draft of the constitution. They find the announced figures on voting participation unbelievable.

We can only reject such views and recall that the rate of participation in all of the referendums, which Morocco has held since 1962, as well as the percentage of the "yes" vote, have always been very high, whatever the attitude of the political parties and whatever the purpose of the referendum.

As a result, all of the preceding referendums have recorded rates of participation by the voters between 93.5 and 98.83 percent and "yes" percentages ranging between 97.06 and 99.98 percent.

It is also proper to recall that in each of these previous referendums the opposition political parties (the UNFP and the PPS in 1962; the Istiqlal, the UNFP, and the PPS in 1970; and the USFP, the Istiqlal, the PPS, and the UNFP in 1972) either campaigned for a "no" vote or called on the people not to vote.

And each time the rank-and-file members of these parties just listened to the call of duty and reason by massively voting "yes."

Moreover, it should be emphasized that with regard to the referendum of 4 September no political party called for or campaigned for a "no" vote or for abstaining from voting. Furthermore, the entry onto the scene of newly registered young people 20 years of age substantially increased the election lists with a strong group of voters (more than 500,000 of them). It would have been abnormal to see these young people, who had just fully entered the political arena, prevented from exercising their right to vote, which they are quite proud to do for the first time.

Hence the deep interest of the entire Moroccan people in a referendum in which King Hassan urged them to vote "yes," particularly when it is noted that the rank and file of the political parties, the trade unions, and deputies of various groups voted massively in all election districts.

Therefore, we can only express astonishment at the sceptical attitude of the commentators in the newspapers AL-ALAM, L'OPINION, and AL-ITTIHAD AL-ICHTIRAKI toward the massive "yes" vote expressed by the voters, particularly when we know that the Moroccan people of all tendencies and groups, whatever the political situation of the moment and whatever the stakes, have always responded in a truly massive way to the call of their king.

It really is insulting to the intelligence and the loyalty of these people, who have been able to understand where their interests lie and who have appreciated the extent of the reforms in depth of the constitution, to imagine for a single instant that they could hesitate or abstain from voting "yes" on the subject of constitutional reform submitted to them for their verdict.

Human Rights Organization: Political Prisoners

92AF1191A Casablanca AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI
in Arabic 3 Aug 92 p 3

[Article by "Abu Walid"]

[Text] On 17 June, the Moroccan Human Rights Organization published its second report on prisoners held on political charges. The organization aims thereby to make public opinion aware of this dangerous phenomenon. The report came with the battle cry, "Towards an End to Political Detention."

The detainees in the report were classified into three categories:

1. Prisoners of conscience. These were imprisoned on the charge of belonging to organizations considered "illegal," distributing leaflets, demonstrating peacefully, or engaging in political, ideological, or union activities.
2. Prisoners arrested in strikes and demonstrations, all of whom were charged with acts of violence and sabotage. These prisoners, in turn, were linked to events with a social stamp, then union and political.
3. Prisoners on the charge of planning an armed plot or violence for political purposes. They were dealt with on the basis that the authorities themselves gave them special treatment, and reports on groups of them were added for political considerations.

The report contains 532 prisoners. The first is Brother Ahmad Khiyar, arrested on July 8, 1972, and sentenced to death, commuted to 30 years last January. The latest prisoner is Brother Idris al-Ghunaymi, the public administrative writer for the General Federation of Workers in Sidi Slimane. He was arrested in April and initially sentenced to 5 years. The Court of Appeal upheld this sentence last week.

According to the Organization's report, there are 11 prisoners sentenced to death (it was reported in the Amnesty International report that death sentences have not been carried out in Morocco in more than 10 years). But 32 prisoners are the victims of life sentences.

The total years to which the prisoners are sentenced is 2,339 years, a record number for Morocco, for our country has never known a time when the "weight" of years of detention has exceeded 23 centuries.

All the prisoners (with very few exceptions) were born after Morocco's independence, with their average ages from 26 to 30, and there are two prisoners who are [in solitary confinement?].

The regions in which the arrests or trials took place vary. They may be classified as follows, according to economic districts.

North-central, basically Fes, 354.

Northwestern, 79.

Tanisfit (Marrakech, Asfi, El-Kelaa-des-Srarnha), 49.

Central, with most prisoners from Casablanca, 37.

It may be noted, going by the detention centers included by the Moroccan Human Rights Organization's report, that the southern and south-central districts recorded no instances of political detention.

For reference, the Organization published its first report on 26 July 1989. It contained 226 detainees, with verdicts at that time totaling about 2,180 years, in addition to dozens of death sentences and life sentences.

SUDAN

New Islamic Council President Interviewed

92AF1269A Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 11 Sep 92
pp 24-25, 63

[Interview with al-Tahir 'Abdallah Buyur 'Abdallah Al-Jak, head of pro-SPLM Islamic Council, by Ghanim 'Abduh in Cairo; date not given: "Al-Turabi Was the First To Give the Conflict Religious Coloring"—first three paragraphs are AL-MUSAWWAR introduction]

[Text] Who is this man, al-Tahir 'Abdallah Buyur 'Abdallah al-Jak? Why did he accept the presidency of the National Islamic Council for New Sudan, which emanated from the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement and Army (SPLM and SPLA) led by Dr. John Garang and is accused of being a movement of pagans against all the revealed religions and of receiving support from the World Council of Churches? What is his position on the imposition of Islamic law? What is his view of the Islamic Front (NIF), led by al-Turabi? What are his predictions about the path toward which the NIF's practices lead? Finally, why has he come to Cairo at this particular time?

Before meeting with al-Tahir, I met with 'Abdallah 'Ubayd, general secretary of the Egyptian-Sudanese Solidarity Committee. He introduced al-Tahir as belonging to a religious family that played a pioneering role in founding Islamic work in Sudan. His father, 'Abdallah Al-Jak, was the first to open a school in the city of Bor to teach the Koran and the first to serve as the Muslims' imam in those days. The family, represented by its head, continued to be involved in Islamic work. Al-Tahir was selected from among other Muslims to chair the Islamic Council for New Sudan not only because he is a good Muslim, but because of his personal effort for the honor of Islam and for human rights. He graduated from the armed forces in 1973 and was sent to the United States as part of an Engineers' Corps mission. He subsequently joined the SPLM and SPLA. He now has the rank of commander. He is a member of the Command Council, the General Field Staff,

and the National Liberation Council of the SPLM and SPLA. He is also president of the Islamic Council for New Sudan.

The South's Islam

Al-Tahir began the interview by explaining the reasons for his visit to Cairo.

[Al-Jak] I came to Cairo at the invitation of the Egyptian-Sudanese Solidarity Committee. I came to strengthen the ties of friendship that link our two peoples and to present the ideas that led to the formation of the Islamic Council for New Sudan. These can be summarized as concern for the affairs of Islam and Muslims in the liberated areas controlled by the SPLM and SPLA. The Council's most important goals are to spread Islam, manage the affairs of the Muslim community, and do charitable and humanitarian work in the name of Islam inside and outside of Sudan.

Many ages have passed since Islam entered Sudan, beginning with the Funj kingdom and Dabur—ages of flowering and ages of decline. The causes are many. The most important cause of decline has been the attack that the NIF regime, under the leadership of Hasan al-Turabi, is leading against "people of the book" who belong to other religions, against the nonreligious, and even against Muslims who do not belong to al-Turabi's NIF.

The actions, behavior, and practices of al-Turabi's NIF have reduced the likelihood of Sudanese converting to Islam. Although the proportion of Muslims in the Sudanese South used to be higher than that of Christians, it is now 2 percent lower because of the NIF's behavior. But Islam will survive. If it is not the first revealed religion in the South, it is the second.

Hence the importance of the establishment of the Islamic Council for New Sudan to work to spread Islam by wisdom and good preaching, not by intimidation and murder.

The SPLM and SPLA realized the danger of religious fundamentalism. In their 1983 charter, they considered this and the national question to be the two elements that the Sudanese ruling clique was exploiting as a tool to deceive and divide the people so that they could rule and exploit them. The SPLM therefore called for separating the state from the mosque and the church and full freedom for all religions to practice their rites without hindrance or intimidation, as long as this freedom is not exploited for political purposes. Religion belongs to God, and the fatherland belongs to everyone.

Charges

[Abduh] Dr. Garang's SPLM and SPLA are charged with being funded by the World Council of Churches.

[Al-Jak] If the funding were as it is said to be, Dr. Garang himself would not have announced the establishment of the Islamic Council for New Sudan. People have accused the SPLM of many charges that have proved false. The latest charge was made by the head of the Sudanese regime when he issued a statement broadcast worldwide saying that a Saudi ship loaded with weapons and ammunition

was at that moment unloading its cargo in the port of Mombasa. The Kenyan government issued an official statement that no such ship from Saudi Arabia or elsewhere had entered its ports and that not a single rifle was being carried to the SPLA.

[Abduh] The sixth article of the document instituting the Islamic Council for New Sudan affirmed the need to separate Islam from politics. Yet in its conclusion, the same document stresses the need to work to overthrow the NIF government in Sudan so that the Council can spread Islam in Sudan! Isn't that a contradiction?

[Al-Jak] The Islamic Council for New Sudan calls for firmly establishing freedom of religion, which is a human right and human freedom. International organizations interested in human rights and not involved in politics have condemned the NIF government and its actions. There is no hope of establishing these rights given the practices of the NIF, which acts in accordance with neither the Koran nor the sunnah, because it is a political, not a religious front. It wants to accomplish its aims in the name of religion. Indeed, it considers a Muslim to be one who believes in the charter of al-Turabi's NIF, and no one else. For our part, we believe that ruling Sudan by a religious or racial majority will affect the unity of Sudan and lead to its division. That is what we do not want and what leads us to demand separation of religion from the state in the new Sudan that we envisage.

Therefore, working to overthrow the NIF government in Khartoum is not political action, but defense of basic human rights. We as Muslims recognize the revealed heavenly religions. We think that following the tolerant teachings of Islam without intimidation or repression is the way to spread Islam in Sudan. If Christian charitable organizations stand behind spreading Christianity in Sudan, particularly in the South, with their resources, then the Islamic Council for New Sudan under the charter of the SPLM has every right to work to spread the religion of Islam in a framework of free competition and dedicated work. The Arab and Islamic worlds should support the Council with all they have.

Al-Turabi, Support

[Abduh] Perhaps it was proselytizing and aid by Christian organizations that caused al-Turabi to state that the civil war in Sudan was a war between the Muslim North and the Christian South.

[Al-Jak] The war going on in the South of the country historically has its causes and its justifications. Al-Turabi and the NIF Party are the first to know that the SPLM is not a Christian religious organization, but a political movement.

The movement has been accused by the NIF and circles loyal to it of being a nonreligious, communist, and secularist movement. This charge collapsed because of what the SPLM proved during its struggle and because Islamic leaders from the East, North, Center, and West—all the parts of Sudan—have joined the SPLM.

The obvious truth is that the conflict in the Sudanese South has had a religious coloring only since 1983, under the leadership of NIF elements in the Numayri regime when they passed the September 1983 laws.

The SPLM and SPLA originated in the context of a conflict between different Sudanese nationalisms: one of them persecuted, wronged, and marginalized and the other one ruling. Al-Turabi and his group were the ones who gave the conflict a religious coloring and made this point the focus of the conflict. Now, more than at any time in the past, they are working to accentuate this coloring in order to bring international Islamic power, now led by Iran, into the Sudanese conflict. This has indeed happened, whether from Iran, Iraq, or some of the other Arab states.

They Are the Secessionists

[Abduh] As a prominent member of the SPLM leadership, how do you explain the movement's retreat from its charter statement about a united Sudan? How do you explain its announcement in the 1991 Torit communique of support for a referendum on self-determination, which could lead to the South's separation from the North?

[Al-Jak] The SPLM is a Sudanese movement to liberate the whole Sudan; it is not a separatist movement. This is what the charter affirms and what all the moves of the SPLM have confirmed. At the Abuja conference we demanded a secular, democratic, unified government. The NIF, led by al-Turabi, rejected this goal because it does not believe in democracy or a multiparty system. In order for the SPLM to avoid a split between itself and the al-Nasir group (a group of SPLA leaders that publicly disagreed and split with Garang and proclaimed the independence of the South)—to avoid such a split we announced that we did not oppose the right to self-determination. The NIF rejected this and openly announced that whoever wanted this right would have to obtain it at gunpoint. Thus the NIF revealed its policy aimed at dividing Sudan into two states. In this respect the NIF agrees with the al-Nasir group.

[Abduh] The al-Nasir group is not alone in demanding separation. There is the (Adir) group, which includes southern intellectuals and politicians. It held its meeting in September 1991 in Ireland.

[Al-Jak] They are free. They are not members of the SPLM. This is not the first time that some southerners have demanded separation. There was the Anyanya-1 and the Anyanya-2; both demanded separation. But the SPLM has stood against all these currents because it is fighting for one united democratic Sudan in which all Sudanese are equal before the law, regardless of religion, color, race, or tribe. That is why al-Turabi sees our movement as a danger to his goals. Because he cannot eliminate the movement, he is working to separate the Sudanese South. He is working shoulder to shoulder with the proponents of secession in this effort. Anyone who reads the NIF's newspapers, such as AL-IKHLAS and AL-QUWAT AL-MUSALLAHAH, will find clear indications of this attitude.

[Abduh] Do you, as president of the Islamic Council for New Sudan, think that the opposition to the NIF regime is a weak opposition?

[Al-Jak] We admit that the opposition is a tool that is not up to what we want and seek. But I cannot grant the proposition that the opposition is weak. The opposition includes the Sudanese democratic forces that represent the great majority of the Sudanese people according to the last elections held under a constitutional regime. The opposition that proclaimed itself four months after the establishment of the al-Bashir regime embraced all the democratic sectors of the Sudanese people as represented in the political parties, the trade and labor unions, and members of the SPLM and SPLA. The legitimate leadership of the Sudanese Army, which swore an oath to the constitution and the democratic regime before the elected National Assembly, has joined the opposition—something that never has happened in the history of Sudan. Leaders who were discharged from the Army by coup used to be discharged and forgotten.

Since taking power, this regime has discharged 63 percent of the officers of the armed forces who were in service before the coup, something that never has happened in the history of Sudan.

In three years, more civilians and military men have been arrested and imprisoned on charges of plotting coups than were arrested or imprisoned from the time of the coup of Lieutenant General Ibrahim 'Abbud until the coup of al-Turabi.

The opposition is not weak, but the phenomenon of the NIF coup is one that should be pondered not only by the Sudanese, but by the entire region. For the first time, a coup was led by a political party that was sharing the summit of power through the deputy prime minister. A political party overthrew the democratic regime, rejected democracy, and established a party state, and from the very first moment, it emptied the country of political, military, and popular leaders.

The opposition is not weak, as shown by the fact that no one outside the NIF has joined the NIF regime, except for a few cadres who had been planted in the political parties. From the 120-member political bureau of the Ummah Party only 3 members joined them. From that of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), which includes 80 members, only 2 joined them, and no one from the other parties. This has led one of the regime's writers to say in a published article that he had noticed that in the national dialogue conferences "the NIF was talking to the NIF."

End of the Road

[Abduh] How then do you explain the victories that the regime's forces have achieved and the fall of the South's cities, one after another?

[Al-Jak] The name of the campaign that the regime's forces have launched makes the goal clear. They named it "End of the Road." If their forces win, they will have finished the SPLM and the SPLA and gained control of Sudan and its resources. If they are routed from the South, they will

leave it, having planted the sense of separation in the minds of its people, and will have achieved their goals.

The NIF mobilized all the support it had obtained for "End of the Road," although it knew that from its inception the SPLA has been conducting a guerrilla war. When we studied operation "End of the Road," we decided not to expend our forces: We would withdraw from any position the regime's forces approached and use a guerrilla strategy. The plan worked. We now are laying siege to the cities that fell into the hands of NIF forces and cutting off their supply and provisions lines. We were able to storm Juba, where their forces are centered, and remain in control of the Equatoria region for seven hours. We are still attacking Juba from all sides.

The NIF forces, led by Major Ibrahim Shams-al-Din, a member of the so-called Sudanese National Salvation Council, resorted to moving civilians inside the City of Juba and placing them in a concentration camp that acts as a shield against the forces of the SPLM.

It is no secret that there is sharp disagreement among leaders of the regime in Khartoum about how to evaluate operation "End of the Road." The remaining Sudanese military men consider the attack to have been political propaganda. Al-Turabi has said that he considers it to have achieved what no one achieved before. That is indeed the case. Never in the history of the conflict, from 1955, to the present has such savagery, violence, and liquidations of innocent civilians been practiced as took place in the NIF's operation "End of the Road." They carried out a scorched-earth policy in the South. It is amazing that there are people who raise the banner of Islam when their aim is to annihilate one-third of the people.

Drafting Children

[Abduh] A charge being made against the SPLM is that its siege of Juba threatens 300,000 citizens with death by starvation.

[Al-Jak] It was we who asked the United Nations to coordinate with the NIF government to guarantee that supplies reach our people in Juba or that they be taken out of the city and placed under UN supervision, away from operations areas and under the supervision of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity.

When UN planes came, the NIF government used them to transport weapons, ammunition, and soldiers. The United Nations announced this and withdrew its representatives. Who then is exposing citizens to danger?

[Abduh] What is the story about drafting children into the SPLA?

[Al-Jak] The matter is different from what is being said. When NIF forces attack, they do not discriminate between old and young, civilians and fighters, or women and men. When we saw them killing children, we gathered about 12,000 children between 8 and 16 years old and placed them in education centers in Ethiopia in cooperation with certain UN agencies. After the fall of the Mengistu regime, we brought them back to the Fashala area. When NIF

forces approached Fashala, we transported the children to the Sudanese-Kenyan border in the (Naruz) area. When the NIF attacked that region, we turned the children over to the United Nations, which is now responsible for them. If they are harmed, we shall be the first to condemn the United Nations and call them to task before international public opinion.

[Abduh] Finally, what do you think is the most important thing happening in the ongoing conflict in Sudan?

[Al-Jak] The Sudanese problem has begun to emerge from its national, local, Sudanese context and become a regional, pan-Arab problem because of the establishment of the NIF. This regime relies in ideology on a cosmic system. From the beginning, it has been based on considering itself an international organization. The Muslim Brotherhood in Sudan, like all the other groups, was an office that was subordinate to the Muslim Brotherhood leaders in Cairo. It is a regime whose first principles rest on the comprehensiveness of Islamic regimes—cosmic, not international. The regime in Khartoum will export all its difficulties and problems after failing to unload them in the South. It has not been able to attract a single person to come out acclaiming its alleged victory and the occupation of Torit, Garang's purported capital (it really is not).

We see that the NIF has unbounded ambition and imagination. They know that Sudan, in its current condition, is unsuited to being the center of the new fundamentalist international they want. But it is suited to being a support point or a take-off point. They know that the capital of the extended Islamic state they want to establish is not Khartoum. Its leading capitals have been and will continue to be Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad, Rabat, Mecca, and Medina. The Sudan is merely a take-off point from which they can head north.

New Political Developments Analyzed

92AF1170A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
10 Aug 92 p 15

[Article by al-Sirr Sayyid Ahmad: "Return to Basics"]

[Text] Three main developments have emerged on the political scene in Sudan during the past week: the release of certain political detainees, an invitation to all those who have suffered damages from security agency practices to submit their grievances to the courts, and the warm welcome given to the restoration of the link with the IMF, following its decision to delay the procedure of expelling Sudan from membership after previously declaring it a noncooperative country.

Observers were surprised by this change in the situation vis-a-vis the IMF. During the past three years, the West has concentrated on using this organization as a means to expand its hegemony over developing countries and to impose cultural directions on them, especially the Islamic countries. This position was what caused one of the regime's leaders, Colonel Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, to equate his hatred of the IMF with his hatred of Israel. The regime's position vis-a-vis the IMF and its policies is not unusual, in as much as its roots extend back to the

Islamic Front's position of opposition to the agreement with the IMF that was ratified by al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's government in late 1987.

Despite this hard-line position, however, the regime is practical. Since last year, it has begun to implement the IMF's recommendations. It continued to take these steps in February 1992 by lifting subsidies from several commodities and floating the Sudanese pound. This meant lowering the value of the currency by 100 percent, while the IMF was asking for a 60 percent reduction. If these steps by themselves formed a motive for the IMF to reconsider its dealings with Sudan, its biggest incentive continued to be the "bad blood" with the country, which is its largest debtor, in hopes of obtaining the more than \$1 billion that Sudan owes.

Two issues remain. The first is that the program of economic concentration should be considered to be an integrated whole. It would not be beneficial to implement just a part of it and ignore the rest. Therefore, it is not enough merely to reduce the currency and remove subsidies from commodities; the budget deficit must also be brought under control. This is a matter that has not, and will not, be achieved by the government as long as spending continues and there is deterioration in the security and military situations. This emerges in the numbers announced by Minister of Finance 'Abd-al-Rahim Hamdi. In May 1991, he announced that a surplus of 400 million pounds had been achieved in the budget for fiscal year that had just been completed. He said that this year's budget, which took effect on the first of last month, would have a deficit of 82 billion pounds. A deficit such as this would weaken any other economic accomplishment that might be achieved. This would automatically shift the issue to its political aspect, because one cannot discuss growth without the presence of political stability. One cannot have the latter while there is a blazing civil war. These are facts that are not the IMF's invention. Numayri discovered them early in his regime.

At that time, Sudan was not familiar with the IMF's methods. The pound was equal to \$3, and the Anya Nya Movement, which had been under arms for about 15 years at that time, had not been able to control any military point. On the contrary, the armed forces had the initiative and had, in 1970, destroyed the rebel movement's two main camps in Wongo Bol and Moroto. Despite that, Numayri found that he had to stop the attrition of civil war before he could enter serious developmental action. Accordingly, he concluded the Addis Ababa Agreement, which opened the door for a period of stability and development in Sudan for some years.

The second issue is that a debtor nation needs an agreement with the IMF, through which it can invite donor nations to carry the burden of debt payment, because the debtor country that has the ability to deal with its debts, in accordance with its available resources, does not need the IMF or its like. However, agreement with the IMF is

necessary from another aspect, because it enables that nation to enter international lending markets.

The countries with the ability to lend are well known: the United States; the Western European nations; and the Gulf nations, led by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates. In Sudan's case, to be precise, the United States is restricted by Law No. 513, which prohibits it from economic dealings with a military government that has overthrown an elected, democratic government, unless that government moves towards restoring democracy. Since last year, the parliamentary nations of Western Europe have used the principle of tying economic assistance to the extent of progress in fields of democracy and respect for human rights. As for the Gulf nations, the reduction of a mutual diplomatic presence between Sudan and both Kuwait and the UAE and the tense relations with Saudi Arabia, which, for the first time in the history of the two countries, were crowned by media campaigns, are a clear sign that Sudan should not expect anything from the Gulf, nor should all developing nations, even on the assumption of an agreement with the IMF.

On the other hand, economic talk leads back to the political arena. It is not enough to liberate the economic process only, in isolation from the political and social milieu in which the economic reform takes place. Perhaps this is the explanation for the steps being taken on the domestic front. These steps include a welcome expression of hope that a fundamental situation will develop in which human rights will be respected and in which legal channels can be set up for various political forces to express themselves, without a need to resort to illegal forms of action.

Aside from this, the issue remains of the regime's credibility with regard to the steps it is taking, which include its domestic front and its regional and international relations. On the local scene, the regime's announcements concerning respect for human rights and the release of detainees are meeting with doubts because the reality of the situation indicates that previous practices are continuing.

If we put aside Sudan's deteriorating relations with its Arab neighbors, the step that the Sudanese Government is carrying out, unilaterally, of abolishing the basic system of the African Islamic Center and transforming it into the International University of Africa without the approval of the board of trustees, despite the government's commitment to an agreement that gives the center a legal, political, and judicial immunity (the Saudi magazine *AL-YAMAMAH*, issue no. 1216), or the government's use of a UN relief aircraft, in violation of a ratified agreement, to transport troops and military material to Juba—all of this will cause the road to be a long one with regard to normalizing its relations with its citizens at home and its neighbors abroad. The diplomatic experience makes it clear that successful foreign relations will basically depend on a successful domestic policy. This is the field that requires greater effort.

Agricultural Production Examined

93AF0002A Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French

No. 2444, 11 Sep 92 pp 2356-2358

[Article by Sabah Naaoush: "Agriculture in Sudan"]

[Text] Sudan has a substantial area of agricultural land, estimated at 200 million feddans (84 million hectares [ha]), covering one-third of the area of the country. However, the land effectively under cultivation does not cover more than 15 percent of the total amount of arable land, amounting to 5 percent of the total area of the country.

Nevertheless, the Sudanese economy depends on agriculture, which accounts for one-third of GDP [gross domestic production] and almost all of the exports. Agriculture employs nearly three-quarters of the active population. Therefore, this is the principal activity of the country and practically its only source of foreign exchange, with the exception, however, of emigrant remittances. Thus, in short, all of the economic, social, and financial problems of the country are involved in agriculture.

Agricultural production is rather diversified, as can be seen in the table below. The principal products are cotton, sesame seed, gum arabic, and sorghum. Sudan leads the list of major producers and exporters of these products.

Agricultural Production of Sudan
(in thousands of metric tons)

Product	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Cotton	235	167	189	175	154	152
Gum Arabic	14	20	29	26	29	30
Millet	158	428	285	153	495	167
Sesame Seed	130	131	264	233	194	168
Sorghum	1,097	3,242	3,277	1,363	4,425	1,601

Source: Bank of Sudan, Reports 1989-90; figures totaled by author

Agricultural diversification also involves different kinds of agriculture. In addition to traditional agriculture there are two other kinds of so-called modern crop cultivation systems: irrigated and mechanized, rainfed agriculture.

Three Types of Agriculture

Traditional agriculture covers two-thirds of the cultivated land and employs the great majority of the farmers. Traditional agriculture varies, but it is concerned more particularly with food crops, particularly sorghum, which accounts for nearly half of the land involved in this form of agriculture. As a result, sorghum contributes to meeting local needs and to export promotion.

In terms of real property the land theoretically belongs to the tribe. The cheikh is in charge of distribution of the land among the members of his tribe. This gives him important social and economic power, particularly if one appreciates that the land is redistributed periodically—in general, once in every five years. However, at any time the state can put an end to this system by making use of its right of expropriation. On many occasions lands devoted to traditional agriculture have been redesignated, by government decision, land subject for mechanized, rainfed agriculture. Often, this procedure has benefited Sudanese or foreign companies in return for concessionary fees paid to the state.

Traditional agriculture covers relatively less fertile land with low productivity: 1,237 kg per ha for millet and 269 kg per ha for sorghum (6.0 percent of total production of sorghum).

The manner in which prices are determined is another problem pertaining specifically to this sector. It is not the cheikh and even less the farmers who determine the selling

price of the products, but rather the middle men. The latter buy at low prices and sell at much higher prices. The state intervenes at the market stage, properly speaking, through taxes that affect market prices.

As a result the farmers, who have no social rights, also have no economic protection. Consequently, the great majority of agricultural workers live in a state of misery. And in most cases they make use of loans from city merchants at rates of interest that may reach 100 percent per year. These rates were in effect in 1990, that is, at a time when the annual rate of inflation was 55 percent. It is very possible to see unofficial rates of interest appear on the order of 300 percent per year or even more, as the inflation anticipated in 1992 is expected to be 200 percent. Therefore, these farmers are in debt their whole lives.

Furthermore, it should be emphasized that the large number of middle men, the slowness of administrative procedures, and the distrust in the field of foreign trade hamper exports. Efforts to remedy this situation do not come from the government but from export customers. In fact, some Western and African companies that do business with Sudan have established contact directly with the producers. Certainly, this method is more advantageous for the farmers, but it is important not to exaggerate its importance. This is because for many products, such as cotton and gum arabic, the export customer cannot get around the government.

As far as irrigated agriculture is concerned, it is relatively of small importance. The area of land involved is 1.7 million ha. Some 70 percent of this land is in the Blue Nile area and is irrigated by the Sennar and Roseires Dams and a certain number of pumping stations.

The Sennar Dam was built in 1925 on the Blue Nile. The storage capacity of its reservoir is about 1 billion cubic meters.

There are two other dams: Jebel Aulia and Khasm Al Girba. The Jebel Aulia Dam, which is on the White Nile, was built in 1933. The capacity of its reservoir is 3.5 billion cubic meters. The capacity of the reservoir of Khasm Al Girba Dam, on the Atbara River, is 1 billion cubic meters. These dams provide the principal farms in the country with water, as follows:

- **Gezire Farm:** Established in 1925 by the British to meet the demand for cotton in the United Kingdom, this farm remains one of the largest in the world. It covers 880,000 ha and is located south of Khartoum, between the White and the Blue Nile Rivers. It is managed by the Sudan Gezira Board, which was nationalized in 1950. The farm can employ 1 million people during the three months of the cotton harvest.
- **Rahad Farm:** Inaugurated in 1977 and located close to the Ethiopian border, it is irrigated by the Roseires Dam. The farm covers an area of 126,000 ha. It produces fruits and vegetables and, particularly, cotton, whose export is still a state monopoly.
- **Khashm Al Birba Farm:** Located in the Atbara River area in the eastern part of the country, this farm is irrigated by the dam which bears the same name.

These farms are managed by companies owned by the Ministry of Agriculture, which raises enormous problems, particularly financial. In effect the state is content to make the maximum profit from exporting its products, while it invests very little in the maintenance of its infrastructure and still less in agricultural technique.

If a natural catastrophe occurs (drought, floods, or plagues of insects), people very quickly look to "international

solidarity" for help. Often the restoration of damaged infrastructure is carried out with the help of the World Bank. Of course, little is invested if national savings are small. However, it is also necessary to look at another aspect of things: Sudanese public finances are in poor condition because of the size of military expenditures and the lack of investment in productive sectors such as agriculture. The state does not make enough of an effort to develop necessary and adequate infrastructure. This is the reason why the irrigated area has remained practically unchanged for the past 15 years, while 72 million ha of arable land (the equivalent of the total, combined area of France and Italy) lie fallow.

The third and last type of cultivation is mechanized, rainfed agriculture. This covers about one-fourth of the cultivated land and is in the hands of the private sector. In this sector there are immense farms, covering more than 80,000 ha, which are operated by Sudanese companies in association with American or Saudi companies.

Mechanized, rainfed agriculture is concerned with the production of sorghum and sesame seed exported to Saudi Arabia in particular. One may note that the products grown by this sector are not particularly varied, as sorghum covers three-quarters of the area of land involved in this kind of agriculture. The remaining one-quarter is reserved in practice to sesame seed production.

Principal Agricultural Products

Cotton

In the world market Sudan is the 11th largest producer of cotton and the seventh largest exporter. Cotton plays a major role in the social and economic life of the Sudanese people and in the external and domestic finances of the country. The following table shows the economic and financial aspects of cotton and how they evolved.

Sudanese Agricultural Statistics
(thousands of metric tons)

Indicator	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Producers' Stocks, First of Year	33.8	180.7	32.3	70.1	54.5	43.4
Exporters' Stocks, First of Year	174.7	74.0	162.3	102.8	101.7	57.6
Annual Production	235.2	167.5	188.8	175.1	154.3	152.1
Annually Available Supply	443.7	422.2	383.4	348.0	310.5	255.1
Exports	161.9	203.3	203.8	177.1	198.6	149.5
Domestic Consumption	27.1	24.3	6.7	14.7	8.9	14.5
End of Year Producers' Stocks	180.7	32.3	70.1	54.5	43.4	48.6
End of Year Exporters' Stocks	74.0	162.3	102.8	101.7	59.6	42.5
Total Stock, End of Year	254.7	194.6	172.9	156.2	103.0	91.1

Source: Figures derived from annual reports of Sudan Cotton Company, Ltd.

Cotton has one special aspect, that is, the small amount of local consumption, compared to production. In effect the Sudanese only consume an average of about 4 percent of their production. Local consumption of sorghum can amount to more than 80 percent of production. The same is true with the other food products.

The production of cotton is declining, having dropped by 1 percent in 1990 and 29 percent in 1988. This decline is not caused by climatic conditions but by overproduction compared to sales (consumption and exports). In 1985 Sudan produced 235,200 metric tons of cotton, whereas it only sold 189,000 metric tons that year.

By adding the stocks carried over from the previous year by producers and exporters, you get a total of 254,700 tons, which is the surplus carried over to the following year.

Therefore, it was necessary to reduce production, particularly because holding stocks involves storage and maintenance charges. This is why production since 1986 has always been less than sales. As a result the final stocks of cotton carried over went up from 25,700 tons in 1985 to 91,100 tons in 1990.

In terms of foreign trade cotton plays a very important economic role because it constitutes nearly half of total exports.

The principal customer is Thailand, which imports about 50,000 tons per year, or one-third of Sudanese exports of cotton. China, which is the largest world producer but also the largest consumer, imports nearly 36,000 tons per year. Then come Japan, Bangladesh, and Italy. France and the United Kingdom buy practically no cotton from Sudan.

There has been a quantitative reduction in exports and, at the same time, an increase in the total value of exports, expressed in Sudanese pounds (LS).

Exports declined from 203,800 tons in 1987 to 149,500 tons in 1990. This decline was due to competition from synthetic fibers and overproduction of cotton in the world.

The value of cotton exports, during the same period, went up from 455 to 1,349 million LS. Thus, the average price per ton went up from 2,232 to 9,023 LS, or an increase of 304 percent in three years. Now, this does not mean a real but rather a nominal increase, due to the depreciation of Sudanese currency.

It is true that cotton is in first place in the foreign trade of the country. However, its importance should not be exaggerated, as the market price has continued to decline (about 10 percent in 1982, compared to 1991). It is noted that in 1990 receipts from cotton exports amounted to \$178 million, which barely cover one-quarter of the value of imports.

Gum Arabic

This product is used in the food (canning and preserving food, soda beverages, etc.) and pharmaceutical (cough drops) industry.

Sudan is the largest world exporter of gum Arabic, whose sale is a state monopoly. The country produces nearly 30,000 metric tons per year, or three-quarters of world demand. Production went up from 20,400 tons in 1985 to 30,200 tons in 1990.

However, it should be noted that the cultivation of gum Arabic largely depends on the amount of rain. Because of climatic conditions, the lack of protection of the trees against insects, and the advance of the desert, experts think that over the long term production will be seriously threatened. Moreover, those conditions will affect more than just gum Arabic.

Sesame Seed

Sudan is the largest African producer of sesame seed and the third largest producer in the world after China and India. Contrary to the situation with cotton, a large proportion of production is for local consumption. Barely one-quarter of the production is exported. However, Sudan is in second place as an exporter of sesame seed, just after China. Nevertheless, in that case also and during a good season exports only bring in about \$50 million per year (\$54 million in 1990), or 13 percent of the value of total exports.

The average production per ha varies according to the season. It went down from 242 kg in 1988 to 143 kg in 1990. As a result production went down from 233,000 to 168,000 tons in those two years, respectively. By virtue of Sudan's position in foreign trade this decline caused an increase in the exchange rate. Thus, receipts went up from 269 to 333 million LS. Encouraged by this development, the Sudanese increased the area planted to sesame seed in the course of one year by 22 percent. Production increased. However, contrary to the objective sought, prices fell. In July 1992 the average price was less than \$760 per ton, indicating a decline of 31 percent compared to the same period of 1991.

Promotion of Other Crops

In other areas there is a considerable possibility of promoting other crops intended for domestic consumption and, perhaps, export. In the southern area of the country climatic conditions are very favorable for the cultivation of rice, coffee, and tea. Some efforts have been made in this direction. The result has been considered negative due to the civil war. Therefore, it is easy to understand that this war involves useless military expenditures and harmful economic effects. However, it also prevents the development of crops having major importance for the survival of millions of people.

During the period from 1986 to 1990 Sudan spent \$1.206 billion on defense, or an average of \$241 million per year. By contrast, during the same period money spent on agriculture in the framework of the development plan amounted to \$536 million, or an average of \$107 million per year.

The production of wheat is inadequate. In 1990 total production was 420,000 metric tons, which represents about 40 grams per person per day. It should also be observed that in 1985 production amounted to 79,000 tons. Therefore, Sudan is forced to import an average of 443,000 tons per year. A widespread myth in the country that, "Sudan is the wheat granary of the Arab world," in fact can only become a reality with a great deal of effort, not only in the agricultural and financial field, but also and above all in a political sense.

An analysis of the present, overall situation indicates that the political and economic problems of Sudan are still serious. It will therefore be difficult to produce the 1.5 million tons of wheat essential for annual consumption by a population of 26 million people.

The inadequacy of transportation has an extremely negative impact on agricultural development. Sudan is the largest country of Africa, with its area of 2.5 million square km. In this immense territory (five times greater than France) there are only 4,725 km of railroads and about 3,500 km of roads.

This transportation network was conceived of to serve Khartoum more effectively. A "super highway" is being built between Port Sudan and Khartoum, while simple roads between the countryside and the cities are rare. It is the same thing with contacts between Sudan and its neighbors. That has serious repercussions on the distribution of agricultural products.

The influence of transportation is also very important for the social and economic life of millions of Sudanese. For we have seen, on numerous occasions, that famine is not only the result of the inadequacy of food production but also of the lack of infrastructure. Several million tons of wheat coming from international food assistance cannot be properly distributed to the poor of the country, in the absence of transportation resources.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Licensing Law Issued for Investors, Professionals

92AE0583A Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic 30 Jul 92 p 4

[Article by Muhammad al-Jumayri: "Guide to Licensing of Investor, Professional, and Craftsman Categories in UAE Published"]

[Text] The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has issued a guidebook pertaining to issuing work permits to categories of investors, professionals, and craftsmen, in light of Ministerial Circular No. 13, which concerns the ability of these groups to work in the United Arab Emirates' private sector. The guidebook sets forth the terms for granting work permits, as determined by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. In a 29 July press conference, Sayf al-Jarwan, the minister of labor and social affairs, indicated that the ministry's Supreme Oversight Committee had approved the guidebook. The Labor Law was used as a starting point for the guidebook, as stipulated by the agreement between the Ministries' of Interior and Labor and Social Affairs. This law requires the Ministry of Labor's prior approval of everyone who wishes to work in the UAE's private sector.

His Excellency stated that Articles 9 and 13 of the UAE Labor Law stipulate that noncitizen workers will be permitted to work in the United Arab Emirates only after being approved by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. They must obtain a permit in accordance with the principles established by the ministry, on the condition that they possess the professional qualifications required for the job and that they have legally entered the country, in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations.

Article 13 of 1989 Ministerial Decree No. 52 also stipulates that approval will not be granted for the employment of noncitizen workers unless an application has been submitted by their employer, who must be registered to

carry out administrative, manufacturing, commercial, or other activities, or by an organization licensed to operate in the United Arab Emirates, owned by a citizen or in which citizens participate, in accordance with applicable laws.

It is also stipulated among these conditions that there must be no citizens registered at the employment offices who are capable of doing that desired job, that the worker who is seeking employment be between 18 and 60 years old. The maximum age of the worker may be exceeded in cases in which the worker required for employment has considerable and rare expertise in his specialty, provided that the exception has the ministry's approval.

Minister al-Jarwan said that the labor law's provisions stress the necessity for a worker who comes to the United Arab Emirates to work in various commercial fields, including investment, professional, or craftsman activities, to obtain the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs' approval before he can be granted a work permit for these categories, provided that he has a citizen partner, sponsor, or employment agent in one of the emirates, in accordance with Ministerial Circular No. 13.

Sayf al-Jarwan added that there is a category prevalent in the UAE that does not fit into the categories stipulated by the Law of Companies and that does not fall under the heading of investor. He pointed out that contacts have been made with municipalities and other authorities to discuss defining the position of this group, which is made up of owners of small establishments currently in existence and not likely to be categorized. They are presently being dealt with in accordance with regulations issued by local authorities. This means that they have been established and are dealing with previous authorities. The ministry is not unaware of this category and is dealing with them temporarily until legislation, or a law regulating them, is enacted.

Sayf al-Jarwan explained that the Ministry of Information and Culture allotted to the Ministry of Labor television airtime every Saturday for officials to discuss specific meanings, negative aspects, and other matters, in order to educate UAE citizens and residents, both employers and workers. He pointed out that the ministry has noted a lack of awareness about the ministry's actions and regulations among individuals of the community. It has also noted practices that violate the labor laws and executive decisions. There are dangers, such as narcotics, workers running away from their sponsors, divorce, etc., that cause the ministry to ask the various media agencies for cooperation, in order to draw the community's attention to, and to reduce, these phenomena.

Al-Jarwan pointed out that citizens could submit ideas to the Ministry, as well as questions. "The point of this series, which the Ministry of Labor is conducting in coordination with the Ministry of Information, is to help obtain these ideas and solutions and to answer questions by telephone. Accordingly, we decided to undertake this media awareness campaign, if that is the correct term, through the video, audio, and print media to clarify these concerns.

The television series began airing two weeks ago and will continue for a long time to allow for discussion between concerned citizens and officials."

The minister emphasized that there is a law that gives rights to workers, but it also requests that workers fulfill their duties vis-a-vis their employers. If it is found that the workers are heedless, there are decrees that obligate them to fulfill their duties.

The minister also stressed that workers do not have the right to leave their jobs and go to another position. If a worker has completed his job, he must return to his country. Running away will cost him his end-of-employment rights.

He referred to Article 128, which stipulates that no other employer is permitted to employ a worker, or retain him, unless he is the original sponsor, i.e., no other company is permitted to hire workers who are not under their sponsorship.

Moreover, Article 181 stipulates that anyone who employs a worker who is not under his sponsorship will be punished by imprisonment for a term not to exceed six months and a fine of not more than 3,000 UAE dirhams. It should be pointed out that the ministry has not applied the pure law, nor has it renounced articles like this.

The minister explained that new labor courts will be established and will be defined soon. They will be under the Ministry of Justice and will pursue their activities through the Labor Law. He indicated that the proposed courts will be established in Abu Dhabi, Dubayy, and al-Shariqah as a first step. Later, they will be universal in the entire United Arab Emirates. He emphasized that many labor disputes are solved amicably by the ministry, while a few others become court cases.

He alluded to the fact that the ministry had completed the agenda for a previously announced forum on labor awareness and instruction. The speaker's role also has been completed. The forum has been scheduled for the second half of October 1992. It will be a forum with a broad purpose that will offer the opinions and views of specialists in labor affairs.

A guidebook on work permits in investor, professional, and craftsmen categories has been established. It stipulates that the investor is a person who has money and undertakes to use it in a commercial, industrial, or services field with a citizen as a partner. It also stipulates that a professional is a person who has specialized educational qualifications, such as a doctor, engineer, accountant, computer operator, or legal translator, and who practices his profession freely under the sponsorship of, or in partnership with, a citizen. However, he may not work for anyone else for pay. A craftsman is defined as a person who has practical expertise in a specific manual skill and who plies his trade for private gain, under a citizen's sponsorship or partnership, or a citizen employment agent. Trades include carpentry, tailoring, mechanics, electrician, metal-worker, refrigeration, upholsterer, builder, etc.

The guidebook includes measures to obtain data from these categories and stipulates that the application must be submitted, in accordance with an example prepared by the ministry, by the partner, sponsor, or citizen employment agent, or by those who are empowered legally, after the required fees are paid. A letter of reference must accompany it from the municipality, along with the endorsement of the Ministry of Economy and the judicial authority concerned. The relevant departments and the ministry must confirm that the applicant has a legal residency permit.

The guidebook also stipulates that the application must be submitted to the office of the ministry's assistant under secretary for labor affairs, in the ministry's secretariat in Abu Dhabi or Dubayy, or to the director of the labor office in one of the various emirates. The stamp applied says: "no objection to consideration and decision for the application, after obtaining municipality approval." This occurs after confirming the statements submitted with the application. This copy is sent to the applicant to be submitted to the agency concerned.

If the application is for a work visa, the aforementioned stamp is placed on the visa application and given to the applicant so that a visa can be issued by the immigration and naturalization office. Along with a work visa, the applicant must obtain a commercial license from the municipality concerned and the Chamber of Commerce. The foreign partner is given a work identity card, which indicates his identity as an investor or partner. The card is issued with the signature of the assistant under secretary for labor affairs in the ministry secretariats in Abu Dhabi and Dubayy and by the director of the relevant emirate labor office, in accordance with the recommendation of the specific oversight committee.

The guidebook stipulates that the investor is permitted to participate in more than one investment activity in the United Arab Emirates, only after proving that he has already established an activity, provided that the other activity participated in was sponsored by a citizen.

With regard to the professional or tradesman, the guidebook stipulates that the application must be submitted by the citizen "partner, sponsor, or employment agent," with a copy of the endorsement of sponsor transfer to the foreign partner, in light of ministerial decrees issued in this regard. The ministry will issue a work card according to profession. The card will be inscribed "for work without pay." This will be done after completing the documents, which include the approval of all agencies concerned, depending on the nature of the profession and the educational qualifications for professionals, such as doctors, accountants, and engineers. Work expertise is sufficient for tradesmen, as well as a permit issued by the municipality, membership in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and approval confirmed by the agency concerned.

With respect to owners of currently existing small establishments, which are not likely to be categorized, the guidebook stipulates that the Ministry of Labor and Social

Affairs shall deal with them, in accordance with regulations issued by local authorities in the various emirates, until they can be regulated by federal authorities. The guidebook stipulates that documents submitted to the ministry should include the license issued by the municipality concerned and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the approval must be ratified by the relevant judicial agency.

The guidebook stipulates that the foreign partner must have a valid, legal residency permit, that he be medically fit, and that his case be reviewed by the oversight committee in the ministry for decision.

The guidebook stipulates that if any other cases arise, they must be considered and decided by oversight committees. If that is impossible, the matter must be submitted in a memorandum to the Supreme Oversight Committee or to the minister, through the ministry's undersecretary.

'Abdallah Bushahab, the acting undersecretary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, has issued an administrative circular addressed to labor offices and departments, in which he has requested that these measures be complied with in the ministries' secretariats in Abu Dhabi and Dubayy, and the labor offices in the various emirates. It includes a sample application pertaining to these categories, explaining that if a case appears that is not mentioned in the guidebook, oversight committees must consider and decide the matter in light of Circular No. 13. If that is impossible for the committee, it must send a memorandum to the minister. The circular requested that decisions regarding applications received by the ministry before 31 July 1992 must be expedited, in accordance with these guidelines.

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

'Ali Nasir Muhammad Said To Be Planning Revenge

92AE0581B Paris AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic
27 Jul 92 pp 20-21

[Text] Former South Yemeni President 'Ali Nasir Muhammad refuses to forget the past and return to his homeland after being pardoned. Information obtained by AL-DUWALIYAH confirms that he plans to take revenge through his internal political contacts who share power [in Yemen].

One method has been prevalent in the series of assassinations that Yemen has witnessed for a year: An automobile follows the victim's automobile; then shots are fired from an automatic weapon, and the attackers quickly and easily disappear. The attackers' automobiles usually have forged registration plates or no plates at all because many Japanese Toyotas in Yemen carry no plates.

That was the method used in a failed assassination attempt against Anis Hassan Yehya, member of the political bureau of the Yemeni Socialist Party, which shares power with the General People's Congress. Anis Yehya is one of the founders of the Socialist Party and was affiliated with the Syrian wing of the Ba'th Party, which merged with the

Socialist Party. Yehya then became a member of the political bureau and currently holds the post of counselor to the cabinet.

Anis Yehya is not the only person who is a member of the Socialist Party, holds a prominent ruling position, and was targeted for assassination. More than 14 people who hold important positions in the party have been assassinated since the beginning of the year. Others who are equally important have escaped assassination attempts. The latest successful assassination operation took place last June and claimed the life the younger brother of the Yemeni prime minister, Haydar Abu-Bakr Al-'Attas.

In spite of the many assassinations, the parties responsible for them have not yet been uncovered. Some believe that these are revenge operations; others do not discount the presence of power struggles within the ruling political powers. The latter cite the fact that some assassinations coincided with media campaigns that raised doubts about the intentions of the leadership of both ruling parties. The Socialist Party has questioned the intentions of the General People's Congress and has accused it of drawing plans to seize power with the help of other parties and by excluding the Socialists.

There are some who believe that the assassination attempts that have claimed a number of Socialist Party leaders reflect struggles within the party and an attempt to consolidate it by reviving contacts with certain party leaders who belong to the faction of former South Yemeni president 'Ali Nasir Muhammad, who currently lives in Damascus. 'Ali Nasir and his followers were recently pardoned, and some were appointed to the Socialist Party leadership.

It seems that 'Ali Nasir has not yet decided to return home—for security reasons, according to people close to him. He and some of his supporters in the Socialist Party refuse to rejoin the party and refuse to forget the past and those times, after the 1986 coup, when assassinations prevailed and he was sentenced to death.

What is happening now confirms that 'Ali Nasir is coming to get revenge. According to the latest information, he is in contact with the General People's Congress, headed by Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Presidential Council. The proof is that the permanent committee of the General People's Congress nominated several of former president 'Ali Nasir's supporters for membership in the permanent committee (the party's central committee). It also approved the appointments of 'Abd-Rabbu Mansur and Ahmed 'Abdallah, who are supporters of 'Ali Nasir.

The Socialist Party is sure to view these appointments as a provocation aimed at encircling the party months before legislative elections. Struggles will probably become fiercer and turn bloody, especially given that security issues are still uncertain and that military unification has been delayed with no clear intentions toward the unification.

Yemeni sources say that the security situation and the series of assassinations have increased the level of suspicion between the parties to the extent that each is requesting the other to publicly confirm its good intentions first. Each of the parties uses every occasion to reiterate "national unity." The latest such occasion was when Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih announced that he would not hesitate to confront sectarianism. It is strange that he made this announcement in a telephone interview with the semiofficial newspaper AL-WEHDA, saying: "I have ruled for 14 years, 12 of which were before unification, and I have spent part of these years carrying the burdens of achieving unification." The Yemeni president did not hesitate to talk again about his burdens and said: "After unification, I spent two years with the heavy burdens of preserving it." He insisted that it was not important for him to be president; it is evident that this confession was in response to the Socialist Party's accusations toward him.

The issue of proclaiming good intentions will be the central point in the national conference that will be held next month. It will include all of the parties and will attempt to achieve some kind of collective commitment. Yemenis use the phrase "all will commit, on martyr's heads, to respect the results of the legislative elections and to provide the right atmosphere to hold such elections." It seems that such a collective commitment is still far away and conditional. Many obstacles must be overcome before "consciences are clear," according to a Yemeni source. This comment points to the country's mood as a result of the series of assassinations. In spite of the approaching elections next November, election districts have not been set, and election rules have not been announced. The organizing committee of the national conference is still studying the files of the parties attending the conference. Until now, specifications for about 19 parties have been set, while there are more than 60 political parties and organizations in Yemen.

There is still disagreement on the proposed election mechanism. These disagreements center mainly on the presence of suspicions about the authorities and their aims. Some factions are calling for honest elections and the formation of a caretaker coalition government for the rest of the transitional period ending next November. This government would represent all of the parties, run government business, and supervise the elections.

There is another faction (mainly the two ruling parties), which feel that the current government should continue until the end of the transitional period. Others are calling for the formation of a committee that includes members from all of the parties to supervise the election process, along with the High Committee for Elections.

These issues have not yet been resolved in Yemen. Struggles are expected to reignite, especially during the General National Conference. The conference will be the only opportunity for a face-to-face encounter between the different parties and the two ruling parties. The best and

greatest strategists will retain strength, and then issues will unfold, starting with the security issue. But why and for what aim? That is the issue.

Parties Form 'Supreme Election Committee'

92AE0547A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 14 Jul 92 p 4

[Text] Sanaa—Intensive meetings between Yemeni political organizations and parties and the committee coordinating the two ruling parties, the General People's Congress and the Yemeni Socialist Party, and consultations between the political parties and the president of the House of Representatives, resulted in an agreement to form a 15-member supreme committee to oversee the first multiparty elections in Yemen.

It should be mentioned that the election law that the legislative council passed last month stipulates in one of its articles that a supreme committee with a maximum of nine members be formed. However, negotiations between the political organizations and parties, the president of the assembly, and the two ruling parties over the past two weeks resulted in an agreement to amend the election law, and the number of members of the committee that will oversee the elections was increased to 15. It also was decided to cancel the condition in the law that bars a member of the committee from belonging to one of the parties. The amendment includes the period during which the committee will have authority, which the law had set at four years but which was reduced to cover only the period of the upcoming elections.

AL-HAYAH has learned that an agreement was made between 28 political organizations and parties, including the General People's Congress and the Yemeni Socialist Party, to form the supreme election committee of one representative for each of the parties outside of power and three members for each of the two ruling parties, on the condition that the committee is headed by a representative of the General People's Congress. The committee was made up as follows:

1. Judge 'Abd-al-Karim al-'Arshi, General People's Congress, committee chairman.
2. Muhammad 'Ali Haytham, General People's Congress.
3. Sadiq Amin Abu-Ras, General People's Congress.
4. Jarallah 'Umar, Socialist Party.
5. Muhammad Sa'id 'Abdallah (Muhsin), Socialist Party.
6. Salih Mansar [?al-Sayili], Socialist Party.
7. 'Abd-al-Rahman Mahyub, Socialist Arab Ba'th Party (Iraqi wing).
8. 'Abd-al-Malik al-Mikhlaqi, Popular Nasirist Unionist Organization.
9. Yasin 'Abduh Sa'id, Democratic Nasirist Party.
10. 'Abd-al-Fattah al-Basir, Nasirist Reform Party.
11. Muhammad Ahmad Sharaf-al-Din, Haqq Party.
12. 'Abdallah Sallam al-Hakimi, Popular Forces Union.

13. Ahmad Qarhash, Democratic Septembrist Organization.

14. Hasan Bazar'ah, League of the Sons of Yemen Party.

15. Hammud al-Dharihi, Yemeni Grouping for Reform Party.

In addition, the representatives of 22 political organizations and parties condemned the assassination attempt in Aden last Wednesday against Mr. Anis Hasan Yahya, member of the political office of the Yemeni Socialist Party. They said in a statement published in Sanaa: "This criminal attack cannot be separated from the series of attacks that our country has seen in recent months and that give us a clear indication that a dangerous plan exists that aims to damage Yemeni unity, shake the internal front, spread chaos, and create unsettled conditions." In their statement, the parties called upon security agencies to "bear full responsibility in confronting such challenges, which threaten Yemen, its people, parties, and organizations, and its unity."

Ministers Amend New Election Law

92AE0581A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
16 Jul 92 p 4

[Text] Sanaa—The Yemeni House of Representatives yesterday approved an amendment that adds a transitional article to the general election law that was ratified last month. The article states that the superior committee that will be formed to supervise the first post-unity general election will consist of 17 members (instead of five to seven members) who will be nominated by the House of Representatives and appointed by the Presidential Council.

The article indicates that this committee would take on all of the duties and powers that were stated in the law, except for Article 21, which stated that the length of membership in the committee be four years, and sections of Article 22, which stipulated that nominated members resign from their membership in any political party or organization. It also exempts members from Section A of Article 23, which had stated that members of the Superior Committee for Elections be at least at the level of minister and that appointed members be awarded that level if they were not already at the level prior to membership in the committee.

The new article states that the first Superior Committee for Elections would end its duties after election operations are completed. A new committee, with membership extending for four years as stated by the law, would be formed within 60 days of the convening of the elected House of Representatives.

Observers have characterized the amendment that was approved by the Yemeni House of Representatives as "an intelligent step that puts an end to the sparring that went on during the last few weeks on the composition of the Superior Committee for Elections." The House of Representatives is expected to present a list of suggested names to the Presidential Council as soon as possible so that a presidential decree will be issued. The committee will begin performing its duties after taking the constitutional oath.

Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih has said that the difficulties currently facing Yemen were "temporary and will pass." In an interview published yesterday by the newspaper AL-WE'HDA, he added: "We must be careful of those who gamble on these difficulties and attempt to multiply and inflate them." The Yemeni president explained that the coalition between the General Popular Conference and the Yemeni Socialist Party was not targeted against anyone and that it was not the kind of coalition that was associated with tactical or transitional aims. Thus those who gamble on using differences of opinion and vision, which are natural parts of democracy, and gamble on the breakup of the coalition between the conference and the party, were wasting their time swimming in a "sea of illusions". He added that "this coalition was born to stay...It is expected to reach more refined levels" and "will open up to more power."

Party Official on Elections, Alliances, Reform

92AE0657A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
15 Sep 92 p 5

[Report from Sanaa by Hammud Munsir: "Salim Salih Concedes That Socialist Party Propaganda Went Overboard"]

[Text] Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, chief of the Hashid tribe and chairman of the Higher Council of the Preparatory Committee of the Yemeni Reform Grouping Party, used to denounce partisanship, but he is now at the head of the largest party in Yemen, into which he has brought traditional elements together with the Muslim Brotherhood, as well as the fundamentalists. He simultaneously runs both the party and the Hashid tribe from his house in the al-Rawdah suburb north of Sanaa.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT interviewed him at his house, where he was surrounded by a crowd of men and a group of youths who had just returned from Afghanistan. The interview focused on Yemeni issues, the climate of violence and political controversy, the approaching end of the transition period, and general elections in Yemen. The following is the text of the interview:

[Munsir] Yemen is the arena for interaction among several major issues, led by the upcoming general elections. In what manner is the Yemeni Reform Grouping Party preparing for the elections? What issues will its platform address?

[Al-Ahmar] Elections are really a battle of politics, information, and propaganda that involves excesses among many other elements.

As far as we in the Reform Grouping are concerned, the most important thing about this battle is veracity and commitment to democracy in order to keep the elections free from government control and from manipulation, such as trickery, cheating, and plotting. We in the Reform Grouping want the elections to be conducted in the proper and correct democratic manner, without intervention by any power, and especially by the government and its techniques of terrorizing, inciting, inspiring, or inducing. [Once this is assured], the elections will be acceptable to us no matter what their outcome.

[Munsir] Some people are amazed that the Reform Grouping has acceded, despite its weight, to have only one representative on the Supreme Electoral Commission, while the two ruling parties have six representatives. The Reform Grouping was given no more representation than several other smaller parties. Why did you accept such weak representation?

[Al-Ahmar] Our acceptance is proof of Reform's tolerance and desire for having matters proceed without impediment or complication. That is why we agreed to be represented by only one member on this expanded 17-member commission, on which the Nasirists have three representatives even though they do not compare with the Reform Grouping in any way. Smaller parties are represented by one member each, but the lion's share is hoarded by the General People's Congress and by the Socialist Party.

We agreed to having only one representative on the committee in order to avoid complications and keep matters on a fast track, thereby denying the two ruling parties any pretext to delay or obstruct the elections.

[Munsir] Parties in democratic countries compete in elections with specific platforms that address issues they believe would attract voter support, such as health, education, unemployment, and the economy. What issues does your party intend to raise in the upcoming elections in order to garner voter support for its candidates?

[Al-Ahmar] All of the issues and concerns that you alluded to will no doubt be addressed by all of the parties, including the Reform Grouping. Issues of economics, as well as education, health, etc., are of interest to everybody and all of the parties will try not to be outbid on them. Our interest is in veracity, in that matters be based on truth and on Islamic foundations derived from the Book and the Sunna and in that Islamic shari'ah remains dominant.

[Munsir] More than a month ago, the Yemeni Reform Grouping called for a national conference on unity and peace. It has issued a 10-point communique and has formed a precursory conference committee. What progress has been made in this regard?

[Al-Ahmar] The invitation to convene the conference is still on, but it has not yet been scheduled. One of the purposes of the conference, as you are aware, is to urge the two ruling parties to accelerate the transition period and to hold the elections on time. Those two demands are our priority at the moment, and we believe that the state is headed in that direction. Presidential and other official statements clearly indicate the government's commitment to terminate the transition period on time and to hold the elections. Matters have so far been progressing nicely without the conference.

[Munsir] Does this mean that the conference would be moot if elections were held on time and the transition period terminated as scheduled?

[Al-Ahmar] No, but those are two of the conference's major objectives. If we notice any renegeing [by the government], we will hold the conference to deal with it.

[Munsir] It has been observed that the conference phenomenon is proliferating in Yemen to a remarkable degree. We now have the national conference as well as the parties' and organizations' conferences. Before that, we had a national solidarity conference and Hashid's solidarity conference. How do you in the Reform Grouping stand on those conferences?

[Al-Ahmar] Reform has reservations on the national conference. As to the national solidarity conference, or the so-called Hashid solidarity conference—those exist more in name than in reality. Their planners and their motives are common knowledge.

[Munsir] Do you think that they are merely political tactics?

[Al-Ahmar] Yes, they are political tactics, and they exist in name only.

Incidents of Violence

[Munsir] You said in a recent press interview that recent incidents of violence in Yemen were greatly exaggerated. Do you believe that the recurrence of similar incidents would have no effect on the elections?

[Al-Ahmar] First and foremost, we denounce violence. There has been no effect on the elections so far, not unless there are hidden forces that will change their methods to escalate such incidents. We denounce those forces, whatever they may be, for plotting against democracy.

Extremist Information

[Munsir] A recently published report quoted a senior Yemeni politician as saying that the information media of Yemeni parties are being run by partisan extremists. Does this apply equally to the Reform Grouping's information media?

[Al-Ahmar] I agree with him, and I believe that this also applies to the Socialist Party's information media.

[Munsir] The newspapers of the Reform Grouping and of the Socialist Party frequently engage in information wars. How about the Reform media?

[Al-Ahmar] The statement by brother Salim Salih, who is a moderate, is an admission that the Socialist Party's media go to extremes. We make no such admission about our media.

[Munsir] Will you be nominating yourself for some government post?

[Al-Ahmar] We will deal with the elections first. When the elections are over, we will handle other matters at the appropriate time. It is premature to discuss that issue at this time.

[Munsir] You used to proclaim the motto: "We denounce partisanship whether it is cloaked in the robes of monks or sports the horns of the devil." What makes you go back on this to become the head of a political party?

[Al-Ahmar] That motto was a quote from the Yemeni sage Judge 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Iryani. In truth, we denounced partisanship as a matter of conviction and because we did

not believe it would serve the interests of the Yemeni people, who are a Muslim people with a traditional national social composition. We believe that partisanship could undermine this composition, which we uphold and in which we take pride. Nevertheless, we have abided by the dictates of the union, which we love and support. We reasoned that in view of the fact that two parties are being imposed on Yemen and will rule it, plurality would be preferable to one- or two-party dictatorship.

[Munsir] Does this mean that you accepted partisanship without conviction out of necessity?

[Al-Ahmar] It was dictated by necessity, of course. I prefer how things used to be, but since there will be one or two parties in Yemen, plurality would be preferable.

Numerous Responsibilities

[Munsir] How do you reconcile managing your life, in your capacity as Hashid's leader, with your political and partisan life as head of the Yemeni Reform Grouping?

[Al-Ahmar] With no difficulty whatsoever!

[Munsir] Don't you see any contradiction, or at least inconsistency, between traditional responsibilities and political partisan life?

[Al-Ahmar] There is no contradiction. Yemeni tribes are civilized, with aspirations and the propensity for advancement. They have an aptitude for law and order and are driven by an ancient spirit of civilization, unlike tribes in Africa and some other countries. It never ceases to amaze us when members of the foreign media who visit Yemen look at Yemeni tribes in the same way that they look at tribes in central Africa or in the south of Sudan. Yemeni tribes differ in their composition from other tribes in other countries of the world. It was the tribal shaykhs who sacrificed their heads and their lives in order to develop Yemen and change its tragic prerevolutionary state into the current postrevolutionary renaissance. It was also they whose blood was shed by the Imam in execution squares prior to the revolution and who sacrificed body and soul in defense of the revolution and of the Republic.

[Munsir] You mentioned in a recent interview with an Arab newspaper that "a tribe is part and parcel of the state and that it is up to the tribe to safeguard it." This has been interpreted to mean tribal control of the military establishment in Yemen. Is that interpretation accurate?

[Al-Ahmar] The military establishment is simply Yemeni, and there is absolutely no tribal domination whatsoever. The officers and soldiers of our armed forces here in Yemen do not consider themselves representatives of their tribes, unlike our brethren in the southern provinces, who have this outlook. Here in the north, a soldier who enrolls in the Army belongs to the public and represents all of the people.

The Military Establishment

[Munsir] Some people would not hesitate to say that the Hashid tribe controls the military establishment through an alliance of its leader, Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, with

President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Shaykh Brigadier General Mujahid Abu-Shawarib and that this alliance retains monopolistic control of military leadership positions. How do you respond to that?

[Al-Ahmar] This is absolutely untrue. As I said before, the military establishment represents all of Yemen and is owned by Yemen. Any soldier, be he from Sinjan, Ta'iz, Arhab, or Yafi', is a soldier of the state, an officer of the state, a servant and protector of the people and its interests, and a bulwark of the fatherland.

The military is influenced by no tribal alliances, and we therefore support the constitutional provision that any armed forces soldier or officer with party affiliations must leave his party and sever all relations with it, stay away from partisan affiliations, and continue to be a soldier or officer who belongs to the state, no matter what it is or which party is ruling. It is the soldier's job to defend the legitimate government and the sovereignty of the fatherland.

[Munsir] What position will the Reform Grouping take if the two ruling parties form an alliance or merge into one party before the elections?

[Al-Ahmar] We would oppose nothing that the two ruling parties would agree to do in the interests of Yemen and democracy, as long as it is straightforward and poses no threat to either. But we would oppose any action that would undermine democracy, and we would challenge such action no matter what form it takes.

[Munsir] You are allied with the People's Congress, and you differ with the Socialist Party over numerous issues. How will the Reform Grouping deal with any alliance or merger between the two ruling parties, especially because you are allied with one and are in conflict with the other?

The Grouping and the Congress

[Al-Ahmar] There is no alliance between the Reform Grouping and the People's Congress. Rather, there is a system in place for coordination. We maintain similar systems with the Socialist Party, al-Ba'th, and al-Rabitah [League of the Sons of Yemen]. We boycott no parties and have dialogues with many. On the contrary, we share common ground and interests with the General People's Congress. One area of common ground is that we all refer to the National Charter as an abstract guideline.

[Munsir] You founded the Reform Grouping Party even though you did not announce your resignation from the General People's Congress. Do you still maintain membership in the Congress Party?

[Al-Ahmar] I no longer have any ties with the Permanent Committee of the General People's Congress, nor do I retain membership, because I have assumed responsibility for organizing the Yemeni Reform Grouping Party, which is independent. I am like many others who left the People's Congress after plurality was proclaimed.

The People's Congress acted as an umbrella that covered all political entities—including what used to be called the Muslim Brotherhood and is now part of the Reform Grouping, the Ba'thists, the Nasirists, the Socialists, and

even the Communists. I was among that lot when the General People's Congress was the only recognized political organization in the north.

With plurality, we decided that we must have our own political organization and set about establishing the Yemeni Reform Grouping, which embraces many shaykhs, ulema, intellectuals, youths, and merchants from all segments of the population and from all parts of Yemen, from al-Mahrah to Sa'dah.

Sensitivities

[Munsir] It is common knowledge that the Reform Grouping is an alliance of two main wings—one is headed by you. The other is the Muslim Brotherhood headed by Shaykh 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani and 'Abd-al-Wahab al-Ansi. On what basis is this alliance founded? Are the two wings now in total harmony with each other?

[Al-Ahmar] First of all, we are not two wings, but a single entity with a single personality, a single bloc, and a single structure. This structure encompasses shaykhs, ulema, farmers, merchants, and youths from all segments of the people. There are no differences or divisions among us as tendentious individuals would have you believe.

When we structured the organization we did not enter into it as blocs, but as individuals. I am one of the shaykhs and Mr. 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani is one of the ulema.

[Munsir] It is rumored that it is the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood within the Reform Grouping adopt inflexible positions on certain issues, while Shaykh al-Ahmar is quite flexible. Does not this indicate that differences exist within the Reform Grouping?

[Al-Ahmar] As far as opinions are concerned...differences of opinion exist in all organizations and among all powers, and even among divisions of the same organization. People cannot see eye to eye on everything. Besides, differences of opinion are a democratic expression. When different viewpoints and positions become adamant within organizations and committees, they are resolved by a vote.

[Munsir] It is also said that there is a fundamentalist movement within the Reform Grouping and that that movement maintains ties with fundamentalist groups in certain Arab countries. To what extent is this true?

[Al-Ahmar] Our organization in fact purely Yemeni. Our Yemeni people are a Muslim people. Islamic shari'ah prevails and is practiced, especially in what used to be called northern Yemen prior to the union. We never experienced legislated laws because Islamic shari'ah was the law of the land and still is, thanks to God. There is no reason, therefore, to emulate developments in Algeria, Egypt, etc. Our interest here in Yemen is to preserve shari'ah as a practiced and dominant law of the land. In those other countries, they demand the return of shari'ah because they lost it.

[Munsir] There were press reports a few weeks ago that Shaykh Naji al-Shafi, chief of the Bakil tribe and a prominent leader of your party, intends to form his own political party. What conflict is driving al-Shafi out of the Reform Grouping?

[Al-Ahmar] Thanks to God, we have settled our differences and put them behind us. They were differences over minor things.

[Munsir] Were those differences political or tribal?

[Al-Ahmar] They were sensitivities, some of them over little things, but this is now behind us. Al-Shafi is dear to us and occupies a position of stature in the Reform Grouping and in tribal circles. There are no differences between us now.

[Munsir] Observers at the time described those differences as tribal, especially because you, being from the Hashid tribe, inaugurated the headquarters of the Reform chapter in Sa'dah Governorate, which is part of Bakil. Would you comment?

[Al-Ahmar] I have disregarded this business about being from Hashid or from Bakil. Thanks God I consider myself to belong to all the Yemeni tribes and to the Yemeni people as a whole. I no longer harbor such attitudes.

[Munsir] It is rumored that you forbid the sons of Hashid to join any other political party. How can you be at the head of a political party when you close Hashid to other parties?

[Al-Ahmar] This allegation is untrue. The Socialist Party maintains a bureau in the village of Khamr, my own hometown.

Grounds for Alliance

[Munsir] The recent alliance between the Reform Grouping and the Ba'th Party has raised many eyebrows in view of the long-standing animosity between the Muslim Brotherhood and the Ba'thists, whom the former dismiss as secular. On what grounds was this alliance forged?

[Al-Ahmar] The relationship between the Ba'th Party and the Reform Grouping is that of coordination rather than an alliance. Beside, we did not even agree to coordinate until after it was conceded that Islam is both religion and law. Certain ulema were unhappy with the Ba'thists because they consider Islam to be just a religion. When it was agreed that Islam is both a religion and the law, and it was so stated in the coordination protocol, this became the foundation on which the coordination was based. Reform no longer has any reservations. There may have been disputes in the past between Ba'th and the Muslim Brotherhood, but the Reform Grouping is a new formation of which the Brotherhood is part.

[Munsir] Didn't your personal relationship with Gen. Mujahid Abu-Shawarib play a role in the rapprochement between the Ba'thists and the Reform Grouping?

[Al-Ahmar] It was one factor that facilitated the rapprochement. I have shared with the republican shaykhs on one hand, and with the Ba'thists on the other, fundamental

positions in the defense of the revolution since its inception. We were in the trenches together against the royalists in the 1960's and against the Marxists in the 1970's.

We and the Ba'thists shared the same trench and endured many years of joint struggle to safeguard the revolution, the Republic, and the faith.

The Education Law

[Munsir] How do you answer the charge that the objective of the Reform Groupings' recent battle in opposition to the education law was to win votes and safeguard its material interests?

[Al-Ahmar] The battle against the education law was not at all in quest of election gains. Our viewpoint was clear—the entire law was no good because its foundations and bases were flawed. It was totally inappropriate for education.

We demanded that it be amended or replaced by another bill, not because of the elections, but because it was unfit. We have made several challenges to it and to the Chamber of Deputies' review procedure. We are aware, however, that passage of that bill is a priority of the Socialist Party and its ilk in the People's Congress. The law is directed mainly at theological ulema schools because they [the law's sponsors] consider them to be the essence of the Reform Grouping and therefore sought to undermine them. They thought they would be hurting us, but they helped us instead.

[Munsir] How do you in the Reform Grouping stand on the issue of uniform education?

[Al-Ahmar] Uniform education is a cliché because schools and educational institutions of various specialties exist throughout the world. Why don't they begin by unifying the Army, or the Yemeni currency? Why aren't they working to unify the ministries and the security agencies?

They focus only on unifying education, when other countries of the world seek multiplicity of curricula and diversity of specialized institutions, as is the case in Egypt and other countries. This is merely a cliché for political gain.

Amending the Constitution

[Munsir] The two ruling parties are now debating the need for constitutional amendments that would affect the very structure and form of the political system, such as replacing the Presidential Council by a president and a vice president and creating another chamber, such as a House of Shaykhs or a House of Notables, in addition to the Chamber of Deputies. Will the Reform Grouping renew its demands for other constitutional amendments?

[Al-Ahmar] We opposed the Constitution in the days before the union on the grounds that it was flawed and inappropriate. The amendments we called for were not limited to the main article, which should stipulate that "Islamic shari'ah shall be the source of all laws" rather than "the main source of legislation," as they put it. We called for amendments to many other articles, as well.

The Constitution has many gaps, as everybody would acknowledge, but when we made our demands [for amendments] in preunification days, we were told that our

adamancy would obstruct the unification and that we would have to shoulder historical responsibility for its failure because our opposition to the Constitution meant opposition to the unification. As a result, we withdrew our opposition and went along with them.

The second stage arrived a few months after unification was proclaimed, when they wanted to submit the Constitution to a referendum even though it was no good to start with and even though it was already in force. We asked: "Why do you want to put it to a referendum? Why would you want to burden the state treasury with such huge expense when the Constitution is already in force? What purpose would that serve?" "To bolster the union," they replied!

The union is solid and that is why we declared our opposition to the referendum at the time, because both ruling parties sought to get it approved through cheating and fraud.

The vote was a failure, and the referendum was not lawful. It is not true that it was approved by 80 percent of the vote as they claim, because people did not register to vote. Even though the people boycotted the registration, the government announced that it was a success, knowing full well that that was fraud and deceit.

[Munsir] Do you believe that the constitutional referendum was crooked?

[Al-Ahmar] It seems obvious. The people boycotted the referendum, and more than 70 percent failed to register.

Gulf Relations

[Munsir] You made several trips to Saudi Arabia after the Gulf crisis. Did you make an effort to mediate between the two parties?

[Al-Ahmar] I have always dedicated my good relations with Saudi Arabia and its officials to the service of Yemen and its public, both before and after the Gulf crisis.

[Munsir] The so-called "people's diplomacy" emerged in Yemen a few months back as several Yemeni notables visited Gulf countries. What have those visits accomplished?

[Al-Ahmar] So far, I cannot say that there has been any result, accomplishment, or step taken. Regardless, all efforts and good offices are beneficial in the long run.

I indeed value my good relations with the royal family and with my brethren Saudi Arabian officials.

I am convinced that relations between Yemen and Saudi Arabia can only be those of cooperation and sincere brotherhood because the peoples of Yemen and of Saudi Arabia have more in common than any other two peoples anywhere.

[Munsir] Do you favor the establishment of relations—partisan, fiscal, intellectual, or organizational—with other parties outside Yemen?

[Al-Ahmar] We must abide by what Yemeni law allows and by what serves the interests of the people.

AFGHANISTAN

IRI Red Crescent Treatment Center in Kabul

93AS0015Z Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian
16 Sep 92 p 9

[Text] Tehran—IRNA—17 Shahrivar—8 Sep—To treat those injured in the recent floods in Afghanistan, the Red Crescent Treatment Center of Iran has started operating in Kabul.

This clinic has a medical team composed of a surgeon, a general practitioner, an operating room technician and eight nurses.

An official of this treatment center says that it will be possible to perform operations on those injured in the floods using the necessary emergency equipment.

Iran's Ambassador in Afghanistan Meets Supervisor of Afghan Foreign Ministry

At the meeting between Iran's ambassador to Afghanistan and the supervisor of the Afghan Foreign Ministry, it was announced that the casualties from the flooding in the provinces of Parvan and Kapista in Afghanistan have reached 4,000.

In announcing this, Seyyed Salman Gilani, the supervisor of the Afghan Foreign Ministry, said:

Giving aid to the flood victims is proceeding slowly.

While offering thanks for the cooperation by the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, he renewed his call for help from Iran for his country's flood victims. At this meeting Najafi, Iran's ambassador in Afghanistan, conveyed condolences from the government and people of Iran for the flood in northern Afghanistan, which led to many casualties and much damage.

It is worth noting that the floods were caused by rainfall last Tuesday night in Afghanistan's northern provinces of Parvan and Kapista. Several hundred housing units, hundreds of stores and more than 1,000 hectares of agricultural land belonging to the residents of these areas were destroyed.

IRAN

Nation's Mines Transferred to Private Sector

93AS0015E Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian
16 Sep 92 p 23

[Text] Tehran—18 Shahrivar—9 Sep—All of the nation's mining companies with the exception of a small number that are considered strategic and mother industries are being transferred to the private sector.

In announcing this in an interview with KEYHAN's correspondent, Engineer Mahluji, minister of mines and metals, said: Based on a report from the Plan and Budget Organization, the statistics on private-sector mining activities were higher than the figures projected in the Five-Year Plan, and the private sector is currently active and interested, so that the people have identified for us and

requested permission to explore hundreds of mines unknown to our experts, and have received permission to exploit them.

Concerning the transfer of government mining industries to the private sector, he said: In this regard 29 companies have been approved by the government for transfer to the private sector, and they are all the nation's mining companies except a small number of them, which are our mother and strategic industries. They will be transferred to the private sector in three ways, by bidding, by negotiation, and through the stock market.

The minister of mines and metals noted: To provide incentives to exploit the mines, 1,450 mines are already being managed by the cooperatives and the private sector.

He discussed the exploitation of decorative stone mines. He said: Already hundreds of cutting wire machines and other equipment that could be used in new ways in accordance with the standards of today in the mines have been purchased, and their numbers are increasing daily.

Likewise, numerous treaties have been signed with Italy for building cutting, grinding, and polishing factories so that by working with today's technology we will obtain the maximum added value in the extraction of decorative stones.

Foreign Debt Estimated at \$28 Billion

93AS0010B London KEYHAN in Persian 10 Sep 92 p 4

[Text] The problems related to the drop in foreign exchange revenues and the unprecedented increase in Iran's imports last year have persuaded this country to make more efforts than ever before to obtain foreign loans.

The economic publication MEED of London reports that in the last few months the Islamic Republic has had problems paying its debts. Quoting reputable European banking sources, this publication wrote that last June the Islamic regime of Tehran was late meeting its commitments to make loan repayments. The economic publication MEED wrote elsewhere in its report that last year the Central Bank of the Islamic regime, by putting strict limits on the opening of credit accounts, sought to decrease the value of Iran's thousands of imports to \$16 billion. Despite this, the Islamic Republic's commercial policies caused this goal to be ignored, and last year the value of Iran's imports exceeded \$28 billion. The publication added: Based on statistics published by the International Accounts Bank (BAL-Swiss), by December of last year the Islamic Republic had more than \$13.6 billion in foreign debt.

Experts in international finance believe that since 1991 the Islamic regime added at least \$10 to \$14 billion to its previous foreign debt by using foreign credits, the "buy-back" system, and making foreign purchases in the form of advance petroleum and petrochemical product sales and usance payments, and thus this country now has between \$24 and \$28 billion in foreign debt.

Japan To Expand Influence in Central Asia With IRI's Help

93AS0010G London KEYHAN in Persian 10 Sep 92 p 4

[Text] The Japanese are seeking to increase their economic influence in the newly independent Central Asian nations with the help of the Islamic Republic. Recently the Japanese Middle East Institute sent a delegation of this nation's high-level economic officials and made preparations to expand Tokyo's commercial ties to Central Asian nations. Japan's foreign minister sent a letter to his Iranian counterpart expressing the hope that his country would be able to expand its economic and commercial relations with the newly independent republics of Central Asia with the help of the Islamic Republic's current position. According to reports received from Tehran, representatives of Japan's industries, who had traveled to the Islamic Republic to take part in the meetings of the Energy Conference, were able to exchange views with representatives sent from several Central Asian republics. Manuchehr Motaki, the Islamic regime's deputy minister of foreign affairs, told news correspondents on the eve of the Energy Conference in Tehran that the main reason for holding the Energy Conference was to help the newly independent Central Asian nations and to expand cooperation in petroleum and commercial affairs between Tehran and these republics. Informed sources announced that during visits of several days in Tehran, economic officials from several Central Asian republics met with officials of the Islamic Republic's Ministry of Petroleum to discuss expanding commercial relations and to increase cooperation in petroleum affairs. Early last week the Islamic regime's oil officials announced that during his latest visit to Tehran the president of the Republic of Turkmenistan signed a preliminary agreement for the Islamic Republic to help with the construction of a gas pipeline through that country to Europe.

In a statement issued on this occasion in Tehran, it was explained that in mid-September the agreement signed by the president of the Republic of Turkmenistan will be converted to a final agreement.

Over One-Fifth of Dubayy Imports Exported to IRI

93AS0010O London KEYHAN in Persian 17 Sep 92 p 4

[Text] In the first three months of the current year (1992), merchants and exporters at the free port of Dubayy exported about \$570 million in goods and materials to Iran.

Experts in commercial affairs in the United Arab Emirates [UAE] published a statistical report on this country's foreign trade in which they announced that by the end of the year 1992 the Islamic Republic will have bought \$2.5 to \$3 billion in goods and materials imported to Dubayy's ports and brought them into Iran's extensive consumer markets. Reports published in UAE newspapers state that commercial activities in this port are enjoying unprecedented prosperity, and based on official reports published by the UAE, the value of Dubayy's commercial transactions has increased 100 percent compared to last year. An

Iranian merchant living in Dubayy told KEYHAN's correspondent that a major part of this port's commercial activities have to do with exports to Iran. The merchant added: "In the first three months of the current year Dubayy imported about \$3.2 billion in goods, materials, tools, industrial and semi-industrial products and consumer items from various nations of the world, everywhere from the United States to Japan, about one-fifth of which were exported by the merchants working at this port to the Islamic Republic." In part of his conversation with KEYHAN's correspondent, the Iranian merchant said that as in the past, Dubayy is a paradise for smugglers of Iranian goods and traditional products, and that every day significant quantities of elegant and expensive silk and wool Iranian carpets, valuable ores, caviar, pistachios, handicrafts, and advanced industrial products from Iran are smuggled into Dubayy and sold at prices well below the market rates to international merchants and exporters.

Peykan 1600 Offered for Sale to Public

92AS0010F London KEYHAN in Persian 10 Sep 92 p 4

[Text] In the second half of the current year (1371 [23 Aug 1992-20 Mar 1993]) the Iran Vehicle Company intends to produce 15,000 Peykan 1600 Talbot automobiles and gradually make them available to consumers. The price of each Peykan 1600 Talbot, including the costs of licensing and the asphalt taxes, has been estimated at about 1.15 million tomans, and buyers must wait at least four months to receive the automobiles they have ordered. Applicants to buy this type of automobile have been asked to pay a down payment of 700,000 tomans to the authorized representative of the Iran Vehicle Company. In a press conference, the chief of the Peykan Automobile Factory told reporters that the finished price of the Peykan 1600 Talbot at the factory is about 890,000 tomans, and in addition to the aforementioned amount, buyers must also pay taxes and licensing fees. Tehrannezhad, executive director of the Iran Vehicle Company, told reporters: "More than 90 percent of the Peykan's parts are produced domestically and with the modifications that have been made to the carburetor, its fuel consumption has been reduced 25 percent." The official discussed the production of buses at the Iran Vehicle Company. He said: "The prices of this company's bus products are being studied by the Consumer and Producer Support Organization, but applicants may pay on account for buses to the authorized representatives in the amount of 5.6 million tomans for the Super Project Bus and 5.4 million tomans for the City Bus. Any difference between this amount and the designated price will be settled at the time of delivery.

Airline Expands Its Network of Flights

93AS0010A London KEYHAN in Persian 10 Sep 92 p 4

[Text] After Saudi Arabia, the Islamic Republic is the biggest potential sales market for passenger aircraft and other services related to air transportation in the Middle East. In the year 1991, the Iran National Airline Company (HOMA) transported a total of 757,158 passengers on international routes and 4,411,077 passengers on domestic routes, and in addition it transported more than 20,000

tons of freight on international routes and more than 16,000 tons of freight on domestic routes.

The weekly economic publication MEED of London writes that on the eve of the International Aircraft Exposition in London, many producers of aircraft and other services related to air transportation are setting their sights on the vast markets of the oil-rich nations of the Middle East, especially Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic. In part of its report on air transportation, this weekly publication wrote:

Like Saudi Arabia, Iran has widely separated population centers, and for this reason it is eager to develop its domestic air transportation system.

The economic publication MEED wrote: Before the Islamic revolution in Iran, this country had 12 Falcon-20 aircraft, most of which, despite the problems obtaining service and spare parts, are still flying. The publication added: If the Islamic Republic is seeking to replace its aircraft, [Dasul] Aircraft Industries of France is in a better position than any other company to sell aircraft to that country.

The economic publication MEED set the number of passenger aircraft available to Iran at 36, and added that Iran has the most passenger aircraft after Saudi Arabia.

Population Growth Index Drops Due to Family Planning

93AS0010H London KEYHAN in Persian 10 Sep 92 p 4

[Text] The implementation of family planning programs in Iran has brought the nation's population growth rate down to 2.5 percent. Dr. Malek ol-Fazli, population consultant to the Islamic Republic's Ministry of Health Care, Treatment and Medical Education, announced the reduction in the population growth rate. He told news correspondents that the population growth rate in Iran is still 1 percent above the world average. The official, who had recently gone to Ramsar to take part in a family planning seminar, said: "Population growth has caused the nation's financial resources to be spent only on urgent needs such as education, training, food, health care, housing, and employment, and this will disrupt the nation's development program in the future." In the 14 years since the Islamic revolution, Iran's population has approximately doubled with a growth rate of 3.5 to 3.8 percent, and the Islamic Republic has outstripped many nations of the Third World in terms of the rate of population growth.

Deadline for Appealing Court Sentences Announced

93AS0010L London KEYHAN in Persian 17 Sep 92 p 2

[Text] Under a bill whose general form was approved by the Majles on 15 Shahrivar [6 Sep], the deadline for appealing court verdicts for Iranians inside the country is 30 days, and it is two months for those living outside the country.

After it is approved, this bill will replace the Court Verdicts Appeal Law, which was approved in the year

1367 [21 Mar 1988-20 Mar 1989], and not only have no time limitations been given in it, it has also not been made clear in which cases it is to be applied.

Under this bill, verdicts issued by the courts can be appealed in the following cases:

A - In civil affairs:

1. A verdict in which more than 1 million rials is sought.
2. A verdict that is not based on a decisive confession given in court.
3. A verdict that is not based on the view of one or several experts whose views have been named by both sides in writing as binding in the dispute.
4. The two parties to the dispute have not relinquished in writing their right to an appeal.

Note: If a verdict has to do with matters related to the dispute, the period for making the appeal will be the same as that allowed for the main verdict.

B - In criminal cases if the lawful punishment for the crime is more than three months in prison or 1 million rials in cash fines.

The bill will become law after its details are approved and it is approved by the Council of Guardians.

Resources Allotted for Students Half of 1978

93AS0010N London KEYHAN in Persian 17 Sep 92 p 3

[Text] The per capita budget for students in the years since the Islamic revolution in Iran has decreased compared to the year 1357 [21 Mar 1978-20 Mar 1979], and as a result the level of teaching at the schools has also sharply dropped. This was announced by Engineer Binaian, chief of the National School Reconstruction, Development and Equipping Organization at a press conference.

He said: In the year 1357 the nation's student population was more than 7.5 million, and the Ministry of Education and Training's budget was 222 billion rials, which was 18,331 rials per student, while in the year 1370 [21 Mar 1991-20 Mar 1992] the funds designated per student come to 8,214 rials.

Binaian added: We are currently short 150,000 classrooms. The shortage of classroom space has caused the classes to be filled with students and are below standard. The shortage of classroom space has also meant that the schools currently operate in three shifts, and the usefulness of the manpower employed in this sector has dropped.

He admitted that he only has one-third of the necessary budget to build the 143,000 classrooms that must be built in the next five years, and "that is for building classrooms of minimum quality."

He called upon people of good will in society to help by paying money to the Ministry of Education and Training through a bank account.

Industrial Exports Fully Exempted

93AS0023C London KEYHAN in Persian 1 Oct 92 p 2

[Text] Vahabi, the Islamic Republic's minister of commerce, announced that in accordance with Majles legislation, exports of industrial goods will be 100-percent exempt and exports of nonindustrial goods will be 50-percent exempt. Having gone to Rasht to open the Grand Direct Marketing Exposition, he said: The task of affixing the pricing labels has been delegated to the industrial units themselves.

He discussed rice imports and the complaints from rice growers about this government measure. He said: Many rice fields were damaged because of flooding. The crop was reduced and prices went up. For this reason the government imported "some" rice at the floating rate to control prices. He added: The Ministry of Commerce markets imported rice "at times so that every class, producer and consumer, will be protected."

Foundation for Oppressed Creates Shipping Line

93AS0023G London KEYHAN in Persian 1 Oct 92 p 4

[Text] The Islamic regime of Tehran's Foundation for the Oppressed and War Veterans has established an international shipping company and is expanding its commercial activities in the area of shipping goods over various maritime routes. This company, which is called Bonyad Shipping and is operating over the sea lanes, was established early in 1991 and according to the economic weekly MEED of London, this company has been able to carry significant quantities of goods and materials bound for Iranian ports.

The publication announced that Bonyad Shipping operates extensively in transporting goods from English ports to Iran. It wrote: The Foundation for the Oppressed and War Veterans, which is a non overnment company, has at its disposal hundreds of nationalized institutions and is seeking to develop its new commercial activities.

The economic weekly MEED of London added: Bonyad Shipping, which receives help from the English maritime shipping agency [Busliner], is calmly increasing the scope of its activities, and it is highly likely that in the future it will become one of the most important shipping companies internationally in the transport of goods to Iran.

Al Mehdi Aluminum Complex Operational in '94

93AS0023H London KEYHAN in Persian 1 Oct 92 p 4

[Text] The Al Mehdi Aluminum Complex at Bandar 'Abbas has signed a \$130 million contract with the Swiss BB Electronic Equipment Production Industries under which it is buying the electronic equipment and materials it needs to build the complex.

A source recently announced that the Swiss BB company has received orders valued at \$600 million from the Al Mehdi Aluminum Complex for technical and electronic equipment.

The aforementioned source also disclosed that during 1991 the Bandar 'Abbas Aluminum Production Complex

belonging to the international ADC company of Dubayy and the Islamic regime of Tehran have signed various contracts to procure technical equipment valued at more than \$1 billion with large European companies.

An economic publication, quoting a spokesman for the BB Swiss industries, wrote that the Fund To Protect Exports From Germany, Switzerland, and Italy has approved mid-term financial credit for the delivery of goods purchased by the Bandar 'Abbas Aluminum Production Complex. Elsewhere in its report the publication added that late last year [Graft Werga] Industries of Germany signed a large \$353 million contract with the Bandar 'Abbas Aluminum Production Complex to build a 480-megawatt electrical power production station for this complex. The Bandar 'Abbas Aluminum Production Complex will go into operation early in 1994, and its annual production is expected to be up to 220,000 tons.

Telephone Communication Network Expanding

93AS0023F London KEYHAN in Persian 1 Oct 92 p 4

[Text] International communications companies are expecting the Islamic Republic to order technical equipment from them for 6 million telephone lines. For several months the Iran Communications Company has been studying proposals received from international companies in various parts of the world and it is expected that the final decision will soon be made as to which company will get the contract to procure the technical implements and equipment to install the 6 million telephone lines.

Based on reports received, so far more than 10 international companies producing communications equipment have submitted proposals to the Islamic Republic to sell this technical equipment. The value of the contracts proposed to the Iran Communications Company has been estimated at \$800 million. The international companies submitting proposals to the Islamic Republic with the best chances include [Siemens and Alcatel] of Germany, [Ericks] of Sweden, [N.A.C.] of Japan, a South Korean Company, and probably the American company AT&T.

The economic weekly MEED of London, in reporting on the sale of communications equipment to Iran, wrote that the decision of the Iran Communications Company, which was to have been made this summer, will be made soon and its results will be conveyed to the international companies participating in the bidding. The publication added: It is thought that contract to buy communications equipment by the Islamic Republic will be the largest purchase contract of its kind that this country has given to foreign companies since the Islamic revolution.

Elsewhere in its report, the economic weekly MEED of London noted that by the mid-90's the Islamic Republic intends to expand Iran's telephone network by assigning 10 million new lines.

Late last year (1991), two German suppliers of telephone equipment called [Siemens and Alcatel] signed a \$180 million contract with the Islamic Republic to procure the technical equipment to build 1.2 million new telephone lines.

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